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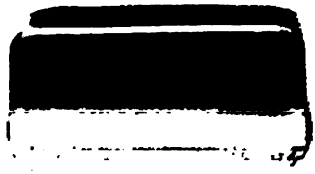

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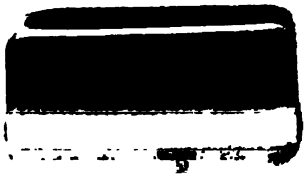

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MEMORIES
GRAVE AND GAY

FORTY YEARS OF
SCHOOL INSPECTION

BY

JOHN KERR, LL.D.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MCMII

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GENERAL

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

TO

THE RIGHT HON.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH,

K.T., P.C., LL.D.,

Chancellor of the University of St Andrews, and now Secretary for Scotland,

Who, in addition to the admirable discharge of the other duties of his high office, has left on Scottish national education in its widest sense the impress of his wise insight and patriotic statesmanship.

156158

CONTENTS.

PAGE

INTRODUCTORY 1

CHAPTER I.

Bury St Edmunds—A walking feat—Unintentional injury to a bishop *in posse*—Appointed inspector—Rev. Dr Montagu Butler—Professor Jack 5

CHAPTER II.

Educational awakening—Government aims—First experiences—A "pheesical" impossibility 9

CHAPTER III.

Wide range of travelling—The devil like a roaring lion—Horseback and saddle-bags—An involuntary swim on horseback—Unsatisfactory buildings—Primitive railway management 14

CHAPTER IV.

Five stages of Code development—History repeating itself—Elasticity and higher general level—Lord Balfour of Burleigh and Sir Henry Craik—The aim a return to the ideal old parish school—Dullards, like the poor, always with us—Early general reports represent the principle of recent changes—Dull and clever alike provided for 24

CHAPTER V.

Dr John Brown's estimate of a kindly joke—One of an inspector's first duties—Cases in point—Why one should not go to Berlin—"Glad to see your back"—"He disna ken there's twa Dees"—A pilgrim defined—"A gutsy brute"—"Are ye the Goaverment?"—Mistaken for some one else . . . 35

CHAPTER VI.

Gratuitous visits and their results—Inspection before the Code—Act of 1861 for increase of salaries of parish teachers and removal of the incompetent—An amusing case—"I jist fushed too mich" 46

CHAPTER VII.

The Revised Code an injury to Scottish education—The "beggarly elements" supreme—Intelligence disregarded—Unfair to Scotland because based exclusively on the character of English schools—Education levelled *down*, not *up*—Many teachers and some inspectors educationally demoralised by it—A proof that English officials did not know Scottish schools . 55

CHAPTER VIII.

Effects of kindly encouragement and words in season—Rev. Dr Mackenzie of Kingussie and education in the north—Sympathetic patience of teachers of the blind and dumb—Abnormal development of special faculties 64

CHAPTER IX.

Old parish schools—Candlemas—Changed customs—M. Biot's estimate—Parish schools' relation to the University—First Scottish Code—"No use pumping when the well's dry"—Scottish and English graduates compared—"A stickit minister" . . . 73

CHAPTER X.

James Beattie — Lessons from a shoemaker's stool: "Bairns maun like their books" — "She has a dreadfu' memory" — "Read as *weel's ye can do*" — "What! are ye keekin'?" — "Hoo could I charge fees?" — "Eh! man, Bell's deid" 90

CHAPTER XI.

Sheriff Nicolson—J. F. Maclennan—D'Arcy Thompson—Swearing in Latin — A reading party — Alexander Smith—'Punch' to the rescue—P. P. Alexander . 124

CHAPTER XII.

Changes in graduation and bursaries in Edinburgh and Glasgow—Aberdeen, why different—Dick Bequest—Graduation and bursaries fifty years ago and now—University no place for poverty of both purse and intellect — Bursaries, wherever possible, should be open to free competition — Crooked answers from examination papers 135

CHAPTER XIII.

Orkney—Kirkwall cathedral—"Picts' houses" and standing-stones—Rents sixty years ago, "I sud pay a hen" —"The haithens ate Tam"—"I thocht I was needin' a snuff" — North Ronaldsay — Shapinsay — Colonel Balfour—Maeshowe and the antiquaries—Professor Aytoun—Cologne cathedral 151

CHAPTER XIV.

Shetland—Fair Isle—A purpose of marriage—Foula—A running commentary on the last chapter of Ecclesiastes 166

CHAPTER XV.

General hospitality—The minister's man—Rev. Dr Hanna —"Rael coamfortable"—"She tak's a bit blaw hersel'"—"Ca' ye't naething to be forced to gang to the kirk ilka Sunday?"—"Ye hadna your purse oot here"—Pathetic contrast—Three dinners . 175

CHAPTER XVI.

Amusing answers from Training Colleges and higher grade schools—"A while at every class"—"Lash him"—Duck and hen—"Naked and not ashamed" —Leeches—French and German blunders . . 187

CHAPTER XVII.

Before 1872 many parish schoolmasters in the North were divinity students—An occasional hitch—One troublesome—Prayed for four times in one day—Religious instruction—Homely estimate of Mary and Martha—Minister and teacher generally good friends—One exception—Relation of school board to teacher of more business but less sympathetic type than before —Apparently less interest on the part of parents—An amateur Sutherland examiner 195

CHAPTER XVIII.

Farm-servants too often regarded simply as agricultural implements—Little encouragement or opportunity for self-improvement—Safeguards of a virtuous life broken down—Feeing markets—Too few two-horse farms as objects of ambition—Too few cottages on the farm for married men—An example worthy of imitation—This slackening of kindly relationship not confined to farmers and farm-servants . . 209

CHAPTER XIX.

The Academy of Old Deer — Sir George Reid, Paul Chalmers, Robertson Smith, Sir David Gill—Large dinner-parties a social mistake 221

CHAPTER XX.

"Watchie"—Advice on marriage—Parody of Tennyson's "Brook"—Brownlow North—A long quotation—Spurgeon—A trimming preacher—An awkward elder 229

CHAPTER XXI.

Professor Blackie—His versatility, vitality, and disregard of convention—Dinners at Blackie's and Calderwood's—The Hellenic Club presentation on his eightieth birthday—His ingenuousness—Masson—Maclagan—Christison—Norman Macleod—His breadth, force, humanity, and humour—The late Lord Inverclyde . 242

CHAPTER XXII.

Infant-teaching much improved—When should it begin—"D—n the cat!"—Great improvement in reading-books—Reading the most valuable school product—Corporal punishment—Dr Melvin—Leather—Thomas Fraser of Golspie—An equestrian incident . . 254

CHAPTER XXIII.

Not to be imposed upon—Praying for Queen Caroline—Rounds of toasts—Humorous certificates—A Nathaniel—*Yon*—Wattie Dunlop—Advice based on Biblical example—Providence and limited liability—"A divinity that shapes our ends" . . . 268

CHAPTER XXIV.

Joint University and Normal School training—Necessary to maintain the tradition of the old parish school—

Progress most satisfactory—Training College curriculum widened and raised — Attitude of Edinburgh Board towards practice in singing—Visits to English Training Colleges — Students' dinner scheme — Secondary schools—Organisation improved — Edinburgh Merchant Company set the example of reform —Lord Balfour of Burleigh's Endowed School Commission—Splendid results 287

CHAPTER XXV.

The bitters latitude — Give it a good name — Sudden meteorological change — Bibulous Scotland — "He put too much water in his whisky"—Its preservative qualities—Spontaneous combustion—An awful risk — A Highland funeral — Roman Catholic rag-gatherers—The most dangerous form of drunkenness—Sabbath observance in the Highlands—*Men*—Superstitions 303

CHAPTER XXVI.

Teachers with rare exceptions eminently faithful and trustworthy — No charity for cheating — Amusing mistakes—"My kingdom for a horse" . . 325

CHAPTER XXVII.

The typical fisherman—Inscriptions—Sir George Grove —Crofters and domestic animals—A ticklesome car-driver—Irish bulls and repartees—Daniel Webster, the American orator — Sir John Macdonald — Fire-brigade drill 333

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Intercourse with the Department pleasant—My connection with it slackened, not broken—Relations with managers and teachers 349

ILLUSTRATIONS.

PAGE

PORTRAIT OF AUTHOR . . . . . *Frontispiece*

"THE HOLE IS DANGERFULLY DEEP, BUT NO JIST AWFUL BROAD;
AND EFTER THAT THERE'S NOTHING MORE BETWEEN THEM AND THE ROAD" 21

"FEES! HOO COULD I CHARGE FEES?" 112

A "SHAKEDOWN" 176

RECENT DEPOSIT, OF MARE-INE ORIGIN. "HUMAN REMAINS" 267

"ACH! AACH! NO WAATER IN MY WHUSKY" . . . 308

MEMORIES GRAVE AND GAY.

INTRODUCTORY.

SINCE my retirement from the public service five years ago, suggestions have been frequently made to me by a number of my friends about putting into shape reminiscences of my official life, extending over more than thirty-six years. To these suggestions I have till now turned a deaf ear, from a feeling that my experience presents few events of sufficiently outstanding interest to warrant my adopting them. This feeling is not materially changed, and I have grave doubts as to whether I am acting wisely in at length agreeing to do what my friends advise. They urge that my service has been the longest of all who have been inspectors of schools in Scotland; that I am the only one now alive who has had a share in the almost countless alterations and improvements in the work of the Education De-

partment, from what may fairly be called its infancy, when only embryo codes had as yet existence, up to the present time; that, in addition to strictly official work, I have examined almost all the secondary schools in Scotland; that every county in Scotland has been more or less immediately under my charge, as either a district or chief inspector; that I have been classical examiner for degrees in Edinburgh and Glasgow Universities, and have given evidence before all the important Education Commissions, the last being the recent one on Secondary Education in England. This is quite true, but I am far from feeling certain that it is sufficient to warrant my rushing into print at a time when, more than ever before, it is true that of making many books there is no end.

It is possible that what I have to say may be interesting to some, and not unprofitable to others, but the consideration that has had most weight with me in making me take up my pen is, that I shall recall to memory many incidents in themselves commonplace it may be, and almost colourless, but around which cluster many very pleasant recollections.

I may have occasion to refer to many old

friends, but I shall endeavour to avoid such references as may give offence.

A man could scarcely have wandered over practically the whole of Scotland so long and so often as I have, without seeing some things and meeting some people with something noteworthy about them. I should be pleased to have the knack of presenting them in their proper relations, with a correct sense of proportion, and in happy phrase. My observations will not be confined to matters scholastic, but may diverge on occasion into lines social, clerical, and general. Illustration by means of anecdote may often be resorted to as the shortest, most graphic, and most memorable mode of exhibiting salient points of character. There is perhaps no scarcer commodity than a good new anecdote. To my intimate friends a large proportion of mine will want the charm of novelty, but there are probably others outside of that circle to whom they will not seem so hoary and weather-worn.

I do not propose to deal with technical topics that have been discussed *ad nauseam* in educational magazines, nor, except incidentally, to go outside of my own experience. I may have occasion now and then to make remarks on

educational subjects that will appeal more to the teacher than the general reader, but such occasions will be comparatively few, both because I have not, so far as I know, any pet fads to exploit, and because it would be very foolish to make certain what, in spite of my best efforts, is perhaps only too probable, that this little volume should be consigned to the limbo of unread or unreadable books. Educational deliverances are notoriously dull. My aim will be a plain common-sense narrative of some things I have observed, approved, blamed, or laughed at during the last forty years.

CHAPTER I.

BURY ST EDMUNDS—A WALKING FEAT—UNINTENTIONAL INJURY TO A BISHOP "IN POSSE"—APPOINTED INSPECTOR—REV. DR MONTAGU BUTLER—PROFESSOR JACK.

AFTER graduating at Cambridge I remained in residence for a short time coaching, when I was offered and accepted a classical mastership in the grammar-school of Bury St Edmunds, where Dr Donaldson, of 'New Cratylus' fame, was once headmaster. There I spent a most pleasant year, joining the boys like the veriest boy among them in all their games—hockey, fives, football, boxing, &c. In this connection one event stands out in strong relief. Dick Shaw, a tall fellow, one of the oldest boys, probably eighteen years of age, on returning to school after the Easter vacation, had said that during the holidays he had walked a mile in eleven minutes. This was not believed by some of his schoolfellows. Dick, to make good his statement, made a small wager that he would walk six miles in seventy minutes.

I happened to hear of this, and observed that he was the object of a good deal of chaff because, with a total disregard of training, he was taking pudding and other sweets at dinner as freely as if he had no gymnastic contest to face within the next three weeks. I liked Dick, and believed his statement about a mile in eleven minutes, but I doubted his covering six miles in seventy minutes unless he trained. I told him so, and persuaded him to come out with me every second morning before school, when I would put him through his paces. The first morning we did a mile in eleven minutes, but he could not face a second mile. He saw his pudding must go, and it did. By the end of the first week I felt satisfied that he would win his wager. The other boys, hearing that I was training Dick, asked me how he was getting on, but I refused to reveal stable secrets. The momentous day arrived. A level mile was chosen, and Dick and I started amid a crowd of witnesses. We covered the first three miles in 34 minutes, and, in sporting phrase, Dick had not turned a hair. He then said to those who had wagered against him, "You offered three to one that I could not do it. I'll lay three to one that I shall." No takers. An objection was made to my walking

side by side with him and thereby keeping him up to the pace. I gave in to the objection, and proposed that I should fall ten or twelve yards behind him, to which they agreed. We finished the six miles in 66¾ minutes, and Dick won his bet. It was rumoured that he betook himself straightway to the confectioner's, and fully indemnified himself for his three weeks' abstinence from all things saccharine.

Yet another incident recurs. I had on the gloves one day for a friendly bout with another of the older pupils, Chinnery-Haldane, then a well-grown lad of eighteen years, and now the Right Rev. Bishop of Argyle. In the course of our bout I countered him more heavily than I intended on his prominent feature, which bled freely. No angry passions rose. In proof of this, when meeting him lately I reminded him of the occurrence, he laughed genially, and asked me to visit him at Ballachulish. He is the only prelate to whom I ever did bodily injury.

I had been about a year in Bury St Edmunds when I received my appointment as Inspector of Schools, on the strength of my testimonials generally, and of an especially hearty one from the Rev. Dr Montagu Butler, afterwards Head-

master of Harrow, and now Master of Trinity College, Cambridge. He was exceedingly kind to me as an undergraduate, and his valued friendship I am glad to say I still retain. Mr (now Professor) Jack of Glasgow, one of my oldest and closest friends as fellow-student in Glasgow and Cambridge, was gazetted Inspector at the same time—he as junior colleague to Mr Gordon in the west, I to Mr Middleton in the north of Scotland. Mr Jack and I entered Glasgow University together, graduated in the same year, entered Cambridge together, and there graduated in the same year, and were appointed Inspectors in the same Gazette. An old minister who knew us both remarked to me that there was a great parallelism between Mr Jack and me, and hoped that we would not both fall in love with the same sweetheart. This was a test to which we were not subjected. I had not the pleasure of meeting Mrs Jack till he had made her his own. Since these lines were penned she has passed away amid the tears of a sorrowing family and to the regret of a wide circle of sympathising friends.

It is pleasant to record that the long and intimate friendship between Professor Jack and myself remains to this day undisturbed by a single ripple.

CHAPTER II.

EDUCATIONAL AWAKENING—GOVERNMENT AIMS—FIRST EXPERIENCES—A "PHEESICAL" IMPOSSIBILITY.

A VERY rapid sketch of what immediately preceded, and led up through innumerable modifications and improvements, to the present attitude of Government towards education is perhaps not inappropriate to the purpose of these reminiscences.

About the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century there was a great educational awakening to the imperative necessity of supplementing existing provision by Government assistance. Lord Brougham's Committee of Inquiry in 1818 revealed great deficiencies and destitution in the Highlands and Islands. This led to the establishment in 1824 of the Education Committee of the Church, which made vigorous efforts to supply the defects, but with only partial success. It was found that there was clamant

need for other and more powerful help than private benevolence could furnish.

Meanwhile the friends of education—Brougham in the House of Lords, and a committee of the House of Commons—were not inactive, with the result that in 1833 Government made its first grant in aid of Scottish education in the form of a subsidy to Training Schools, and that in 1839, at the instance of the Marquess of Lansdowne and Lord John Russell, a Committee of Council on Education was established, with Sir James Kay Shuttleworth for its first secretary. This was the beginning of parliamentary grants in aid of elementary education, and the appointment of inspectors. Successive minutes regulated the proceedings of the Council till 1846, when new minutes were issued. This was followed by the Act of 1861, which increased the salaries of parochial teachers, transferred their appointment from the presbyteries to the university, and opened the office to any member of a Presbyterian Church. Close upon this came the Revised Code in 1862, of which more will be said in the sequel, and which continued formally in operation in Scotland till the passing of the Act of 1872. This Act was rendered necessary by the parochial schools being found

inadequate to meet the demands of increased population, and with important supplements and improvements continues to the present time.

It is right to indicate here the aims the Government had in view when the seeds of the present system were sown. Inspectors were told that inspection was intended to be a means of co-operation between the Government and the ministers or other managers of schools for the improvement and extension of education; that it was not intended as a means of exercising control, but of affording assistance; not for the restraint but encouragement of local efforts. The general duties of the inspector were arranged under three distinct heads: (1) furnishing information to enable the Committee of Council to determine the propriety of granting funds in aid of erecting new schools; (2) reporting on the matter and method of instruction in schools aided by public grants; and (3) furnishing information respecting the state of education in particular districts. I think it may be said that these instructions, with such additions as the fuller development of the system required, continue to describe generally the relation between the Department, inspectors, boards or other managers, and teachers.

When I joined the late Dr Middleton in 1860 there were only seven inspectors in Scotland for all classes of schools except those in connection with the Episcopal and Roman Catholic Churches, which were under the charge of two inspectors, who overtook all they had to do in the course of two or three months. As a concession to ecclesiastical feeling inspection was, till the passing of the Act of 1872, strictly denominational. Schools connected with the Established and Free Churches were inspected by officers who were appointed subject to the approval of the Education Committees of the respective Churches. There were few schools connected with the United Presbyterian Church, and these, as a rule, were placed on the list of the Established Church inspector. There are now thirty inspectors and thirty sub-inspectors, and the whole sixty are kept as busy as the seven were forty years ago. The number of inspectors was not then, and is not now, a measure of the number of existing schools but of the schools taught by certificated teachers. Besides the parish and many other schools connected with the two Churches, there were smaller ones supported by the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the most of which were taught by

uncertificated teachers. The change in this respect is very striking. Schools with a Church connection have very largely disappeared; board schools have taken their place; in almost every ordinary school the teachers are certificated, and every class of school is visited by the same inspector irrespective of denomination.

Forty years ago the attainments of the teachers of schools supported by the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge were slender, as their emoluments were small. A very worthy man whom I knew was being examined by the Society's committee for an appointment, and had his reading tested on the New Testament. The passage happened to be about the man sick of the palsy who was borne of four. One of the examiners, wishing to ascertain whether the candidate fully understood the scope of what he had read, asked how he would explain to a class what was meant by the sick of the palsy being borne of four, and got for a reply, that he could not explain it, for it had always seemed to him to be a "pheesical impossibility."

CHAPTER III.

WIDE RANGE OF TRAVELLING—THE DEVIL LIKE A ROARING LION — HORSEBACK AND SADDLE-BAGS — AN INVOLUNTARY SWIM ON HORSEBACK — UNSATISFACTORY BUILDINGS — PRIMITIVE RAILWAY MANAGEMENT.

DR MIDDLETON'S district included the whole of the north of Scotland between Dundee and Shetland, with the exception of Perthshire and the Western Islands. The schools of which he had charge were those connected with the Established Church and such as were undenominational. Free Church schools in the same district were under the charge of Mr Scougal, father of the present Chief Inspector in the Western district. So thinly scattered were certificated teachers in those days that we three overtook with greater ease, but with much more travelling, the inspection of that huge district, than the seventeen officers who have it now in charge. But we were regular vagabonds, months on end away from home. Had we been asked, as was a certain personage

who shall be nameless, "Whence comest thou?" we could have replied as he did, "From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." I must ask my readers in their charity to believe that the analogy ends there, and that we were not like that other personage going about like roaring lions seeking whom we might devour.

The definite function of this personage was brought puzzlingly before me one Sunday evening in a Banffshire manse. All the family were sitting quietly reading in the drawing-room, when the youngest boy, with a laudable thirst for knowledge, went up to his mother and asked a question, for the answer to which she referred him to me. Coming to me, he said—

"Mr Kerr, is it true that the devil goes about like a roaring lion?"

"It must," I replied, "be true, for it is in the Bible."

This was followed by another question which I did not attempt to answer, "Then wha keeps his fire in when he's gaun aboot?"

The analogy between us early inspectors and the personage already referred to does not hold in respect of walking. None of us did much of that. After I had been over the ground once

or twice by the usual conveyance of railway, coach, hiring, &c., I got the consent of the Department to make trial of horseback as a means of locomotion, and several times rode from Dundee to John-o'-Groat's and back, including numberless cross-roads and paths to right and left, according to the locality of the schools to be visited. I was perhaps one of the last men in Scotland who did his travelling with the now almost disused pair of saddle-bags. The bulk of my luggage went before me by rail or coach, and I met it at various points, where I made the necessary exchanges between portmanteau and saddle-bags. The latter were small, about a foot square, and sufficed for all I required for three or four days' absence from the rest of my impedimenta.

I had a very complete equipment of waterproofs, and suffered neither in health nor comfort from this (as some thought) risky mode of travelling over the north of Scotland. I remember one noteworthy incident in connection with it. I had intimated the inspection of the school of Tongue in Sutherland, and had to cross the Kyle in a ferry-boat. My mare had a great objection to ferry-boats, and could only be induced to enter them by the most gentle per-

suasion, and literally inch by inch. On this occasion she was unusually obstinate, and completely exhausted the patience of myself and the boatman. At last Rorie, finding that too great a demand was being made on his time, asked—

"Wull the peast have any objection to go into the water?"

"No," I replied; "she wades in quite readily."

"Oh, that is goot." Then pointing to a tree about a hundred yards up the Kyle he said, "You will be seeing that tree?"

"Yes," I replied.

"And that other tree on the other side of the Kyle?"

"Yes."

"Well, if you make her go in at the one tree and walk across to the other, she will not be wet above the knees, for the tide is out whatefer."

I got into the saddle at once, and followed Rorie's instructions to the letter. All went well for a few yards, but the depth increasing, she lost her footing in mid-channel and had to swim for about a dozen yards, when she again reached *terra firma*. My legs of course got wet, but no worse consequences followed my first and prob-

ably my last involuntary experience of a swim on horseback. I am inclined to think Rorie had a more accurate knowledge of the depth of the channel than he led me to believe, but I could not blame him. His patience had been sorely tried. For a very accurate sketch of the locality and the lines which accompany it I am indebted to a north-country friend who knows the locality:—

A Horseman, on a Highland shore, cries, "Boatman! launch your wherry!
And I'll give you full fare, and more, to take us o'er the ferry."
"Noo, who was you wud boat the Kyle jist efter dead low tide?
The banks is bad. It's better far round the loch-head to ride.
I'm feared a fiery beast like that micht broke my boat to smash."
Just then Old Rorie thought he heard the sound of clinking cash.
The spell was potent—Rorie fidged—the problem made him frown,
A lick of paint might meet his loss, and then—that silver crown.
"Maybe she'll came quite quate," he said.
"Well, friend, we can but try.
I'll take her head, you twist her tail; we'll manage, you and I."

"The opserfation's fery richt; if she's pleased, goot an' well;
But I will drag her by the head, you'll try the tail yoursel'."
But ne'er a footstep would she budge,—except, indeed, to back,
And rear and plunge and kick amain, as wheedle turned to whack.
"Losh me!" cried Rorie, in despair, "I never seen the like:
She's jist as slipry as a hare, and soople as a tyke.
If Tonal Mòr was here to grip my hands below her wyme,
We'd lift her like a big wool-bag, and boat her in no time."
"Then run for Donald! off!! be quick!!! I'll pay him for his aid."
"Och! Tonal cannot came at all, I'm fery much afraid.
They hed a merrage yisterday (Jeems Pincher's only daahter).
The drink was fery bad, they'll say, she speilt it wi' the waahter.
And Tonal Mòr he's fery seek and canna lift a head.
We'll hev to try another plan. The decent man's in bed."
"Around to ride, without a guide, would take me half the day.
You hinted at another plan; now what may *it* be, pray?"
"Ye see this tree, ahint o' me, and yon on other side;
Jist keep that line, ye'll manage fine, but ye will hev to ride.

For, faix! the time is slipping by, the tide is rising fast.
Look at the floating froth oot there the way it's driving past."
Poor Rorie felt he'd lost his fare, the trial vexed him sore.
"He did his best," the Horseman thought, "and what can man do more?"
But Rorie rallied, stroked the mare, "She'll do, so help me nefer!
Ach! not at all! you're jist too kind. Well,—thenk you, sir, whatefer!"
The saddle-bags were covered up beneath a rain-proof cape,
The head-gear, bridle, crupper, girth, were found to be ship-shape:
The mare into the briny stepped, footing it gingerly,
And soon the sward gave place to sand. The depth was to the knee.
"Step out! my lass, don't be an ass! we've crossed a stream before.
A bigger business this, no doubt,—but we've to reach yon shore."
With oar in hand old Rorie stands, shading his eyes to see,
While varying thought such voice demands as this soliloquy.
"She's going fair, he's sitting square, my word! they're doing fine.
The tide has worked them something west. They're raither off the line.
But what for are they waiting noo? what's stopping them at all?
They're off again,—that swirl-pot's near,—no use for me to call,

"The hole is dangerfully deep, but no jist awful broad;
And efter that there's nothing more between them and the road."

He wud na hear a word I'd say, it's no but wasting
breath.
I canna see but jist their heads,—they're in! as sure as
death!
She's sweeming fery goot, poor beast, and making splen-
dit way.
Before he left 't was on my mind but I forgot to say
Take noo yer pokat-hankercher, 'or ye go oot o' that;
Tie up yer watch and matches ticht, and stow them in
yer hat.
The hole is dangerfully deep, but no jist awful broad;
And efter that there's nothing more between them and
the road
But five score yairds o' leval sand, and no yet three feet
deep.
They'll soon be on the solid land, withooten spur nor
wheep.
The mare's not ould, her Maister's bould (I seen it in
his eye),
And stieve as steel. I wush him weel, and bids them
both goot-bye."

I found journeying on horseback both exceedingly pleasant and convenient. In the northern counties there were often schools in outlying districts where there was either no driving road or a very bad one, and more accessible by saddle than by wheeled conveyance. In the early years of my service I had very varied experience of schools of all kinds,—some fairly satisfactory in

respect of buildings and equipment, some poor in all respects, low roofs, no ventilation, sometimes a stone, sometimes an earthen floor, bad light, no apparatus, maps, or blackboards. I recall to mind a very worthy but snuffy old man who, in his loyalty to her Majesty's officer, reduced the much too limited number of cubic feet of air in the schoolroom still further by busking the walls and roof with branches of fir-trees and other greenery to such an extent that, on entering, one could imagine oneself in a pine-forest. This was pleasant enough in good weather, but on one occasion my visit was made on a wet day. The thick home-made woollen cloth, in which all the boys and many of the girls in Highland schools are clad, and which had been saturated with peat-smoke for months, and some of it perhaps for years, getting drenched with the rain, emitted an effluvium which, combined with the smell of the fir-branches and the absence of ventilation, rivalled for solidity and complexity of stench anything I ever experienced either before or since.

In the 'Sixties railway travelling on some of the branch lines was very primitive. One night the guard of the last train leaving Banff was reminded by one of the passengers that it was

some minutes past the starting time, and replied, "Oh ay, but Mr F. has a dinner-party the nicht, and I'm just giein' him twa or three minutes' preevilege."

On the Elgin and Rothes line I saw the Provost of Elgin walk across a field with a letter in his hand, which he waved to the driver of a train going at its usual full speed. The train stopped, and the guard took charge of the letter.

At Ordens, a siding on the Banff and Buckie branch line, I was instructed to go to this siding, and as the train approached to set fire to a newspaper or other material that would make a good blaze, and the train would stop. The night was very dark and windy, and I failed to set fire to the newspaper; but a stentorian shout which I executed had the same effect, and I was taken on board.

On another occasion I called on a school correspondent whose house was about a mile from a station on the Findhorn line. When I proposed to walk back to the station, he said, "You needn't take the trouble. I always stop it as it goes past." And he did. It is not matter for surprise that this line is now on the retired list.

CHAPTER IV.

FIVE STAGES OF CODE DEVELOPMENT — HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF—ELASTICITY AND HIGHER GENERAL LEVEL—LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH AND SIR HENRY CRAIK—THE AIM A RETURN TO THE IDEAL OLD PARISH SCHOOL—DULLARDS, LIKE THE POOR, ALWAYS WITH US — EARLY GENERAL REPORTS REPRESENT THE PRINCIPLE OF RECENT CHANGES —DULL AND CLEVER ALIKE PROVIDED FOR.

THE development of the Education Code may be described as having five stages. Previous to 1860 the administration of grants was conducted entirely by minutes, which were in 1860 reduced into the form of a code. This, with few important changes, regulated the action of the Department towards Scotland, so far as payments were concerned, up to 1873, when, following on the passing of Lord Young's Act of 1872, a Scottish Code was drawn up, and a separate Scottish Department established.

The second stage of Code modification may be dated as ranging from 1873 to 1886. During this period a number of changes were made,

comparatively unimportant but on the whole beneficial, which it is not necessary to describe in detail.

The third stage may be dated from 1886, when the first step was taken towards a modification of individual examination by its abolition in the lower standards. In the higher standards also there was a relaxation in both standard and class subjects, and, as a corrective of possible abuse of this relaxation, the principle of payments graded according to merit was beneficially introduced. A larger choice of class subjects was allowed, and a more important part in the work of the schools was assigned to them. Every year changes, not of great importance, but all in the healthy direction of greater elasticity, were made, till in 1889 there was a relief of fees for all pupils in the compulsory standards.

Another stage may be regarded as commencing in 1890, when individual examination in all the standards was abolished, and in 1892, when relief of fees was allowed for all children between five and fourteen—a relief extended in 1894 to children between three and fifteen. An unlimited choice of such specific subjects as school boards might think suitable for each locality, and subject only to the approval of the Department, was allowed.

In 1893 the whole basis upon which grants are made was changed, with the result of removing vexatious restraint, and at the same time securing equal efficiency.

The merit certificate, which has the same relation to the primary as the leaving certificate has to the secondary school, was for the first time referred to in 1891, and formed part of the Code in 1892.

What may be called the fifth stage of Code development was reached in 1898, when the method of annual inspection was largely changed, the Science and Art Department transferred to the Scottish Education Department, higher grade schools instituted in 1899, and the whole system of payment for different items abandoned.

To enter into the changes in fuller detail is unnecessary for the professional, and would be tiresome for the lay reader.

Those who are old enough to remember the character of Government inspection between 1860 and the establishment of a separate Scottish Department, and have taken note of the changes that have bit by bit been introduced in successive Codes during the last fifteen years, can scarcely fail to have observed that, in a very substantial sense, history is largely repeating itself by a

return to the greater freedom of action of the old *régime*. But there is a difference in two very important respects: first, that generally higher aims and a more definite goal have been suggested to teachers and school boards; and secondly, that grants graded according to merit, not on individual but average results, secure a higher general level of attainment, which is surely the teacher's proper aim. These changes, under the eminently wise and skilful direction of Lord Balfour of Burleigh and Sir Henry Craik, have removed the temptation to overpress the dull and unduly keep back the quicker pupils. It is probable—nay, certain—that, under these relaxed and more reasonable conditions, the dullards escape the hard grinding that does them no good, and that the idle no longer appropriate more of the teacher's time than they have any right to; but it is beyond question that instruction is imparted under healthier conditions, and with better results, for that portion of our school population who are fitted to turn advanced education to good account.

I think it can be claimed that, given fairly satisfactory conditions of locality and parental care, the Scottish child, whether of ordinary or superior ability, has within his reach an education

that will enable him to discharge his duty as a citizen, and rise to the level for which he is qualified by natural gifts. We have a Code which, though not yet perfect, is steadily advancing in the right direction, and superior to any with which I am acquainted. Its aim—a very noble one—is to restore to our schools all that was good in the old parish schools, and in addition, to supply what was in many cases wanting in them—viz., sufficient attention to pupils of not specially "pregnant parts"—not of the growing kind—but who, though by nature intended to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, have yet a claim to get their lives sweetened and refined by as much wholesome education as they can assimilate. Fears are sometimes expressed that the working classes are getting too highly educated. Educated? No! but foolishly crammed with (for some of them) indigestible food, through the injudicious action of parents or teachers, with the result that a feeble half-starved professional man is the miserable product of what might, with appropriate training, have been a self-respecting and competent artisan. The evil, where it exists, has in itself the elements of cure. Never at any rate must it be said that opportunity of the highest education should not be afforded

to such sons of working men as year after year earn distinction in every intellectual arena at home and abroad.

By no code, however, need we expect to get rid of the boy or girl who unthinkingly crams up the *ipsissima verba* of history, and, rashly trusting to a treacherous memory, omits an absolutely essential phrase, the absence of which makes the answer ludicrous. Such a boy, in giving an account of Oliver Cromwell, writes: "Oliver Cromwell's eyes were of a dark grey; his nose was very large and of a deep red colour, but underneath it was a truly religious soul." Another, in answer to the question, "What was the Declaration of Indulgence in James's reign?" writes: "By the Declaration of Indulgence people were allowed to worship God in their own way. Seven bishops refused to do so. They were accordingly put on their trial and found not guilty." Another, in answer to the question, "Whom did George III. marry, and how many children had he?" throws, no doubt unintentionally, a grievous slur on the character of the old king by writing, "He had no wife but thirteen children." Another gave an interpretation of the Salic law which would have met the case of only one of all the kings who ever sat on a throne, if even the

tradition about Macduff can be depended on: "The Salic law says no one can be made king who was descended from a woman." Notwithstanding such thoughtless answers as these, it is beyond question that in all the changes of the Code the continuous aim has been development of intelligence, breadth of aim in the teacher, and permanence of result in the pupil.

In connection with this return to the elasticity of former days I have been pleased to find, on referring to some of my earliest general reports, suggestions for greater freedom, and a larger exercise of discretionary power for the inspector, to which practically, and with the necessary safeguards, effect has been given. I find on pages 95 and 96 of my general report for 1871 the following remarks:—

"A certain amount of freedom is beneficial, and indeed indispensable, for the best results. The work of both inspector and teacher should, doubtless, within certain limits, be definitely specified, but neither will be so effective if he is compelled to work with the limited range of a machine. I know that a very wide discretionary power is considered dangerous, but I cannot think the objection applicable here. The inspector who cannot, before leaving a school, make a note

as to whether, in conjunction with the examination schedule, the reading, writing, arithmetic, discipline, intelligence, and higher subjects are good, bad, or indifferent, with a result as approximately correct as the necessarily variable judgment of a mechanical pass or failure, is not fit for his duty. It is, after all, only a shifting from one point to another of the discretion which cannot, *under any system of payment*, be got rid of. At present the difference between the estimates of two inspectors as to the border line between pass and failure, and as to exercises of exactly suitable difficulty in dictation and arithmetic, leaves as wide a discretion, and involves cumulatively as large payments and forfeitures as the suggestion I have ventured to make; the difference being that the stimulus under my suggestion would be towards intelligence, instead of, as at present, towards a minimum frequently, and almost necessarily, mechanical. Accuracy would be as thoroughly secured as now, intelligence would be cultivated, and an interest created which would feed itself, oil the educational wheels, and lighten the teacher's labour."

And again, on advanced subjects:—

"Would not the pupil and education generally

fare better if the inspector were instructed to record his estimate after an examination fairly elastic and suitable to the ages of the pupils, the locality, and the whole circumstances of the school? If inspectors as a body are not the kind of men to whom such discretion might be safely intrusted, it is surely not too much to say they ought to be. Under such a regulation there might be errors of judgment, but *such errors cannot be eliminated by any regulation.* This at any rate is certain, that at present all teachers may, many will, and all inspectors must, work more or less in fetters. An occasional error in judgment on the part of inspectors—who are always men of education, presumably of common-sense, and of either great or growing experience—would be a much less serious evil than the mechanical dead-levellism which must more or less characterise every system, whose goal is a minimum of which even the vaunted exactness is illusory."

And again, in my report for 1874:—

"This discretionary power cannot be eliminated by any system however hard and fast. It is a power which, whether formally granted or not, will be operative as long as there are different mental and moral constitutions. It is con-

sciously or unconsciously exercised every day by every inspector in his consideration of the time of visit as favourable or unfavourable, of the character and class of pupils, of locality, of school, of irregularity of attendance, &c. Its exercise will be all the healthier if it is distinctly recognised. I have a very strong conviction that it is only by such elasticity in the administration of grants that any approximation can be made to the maximum of usefulness."

These remarks, now nearly thirty years old, probably read by few and forgotten by all, seem fairly to represent the principle and direction of recent changes in the Code.

I did not, of course, go into details. It was too early to attempt that. I was content to enunciate the principle. Changes in an educational system affect so many and such varied interests that they must be made tentatively and with caution. The complex mechanism of the machine must be taken into account. Bit by bit, however, improvements have been made, here a little and there a little, till now after the elaboration of thirty years we have a Code better than any previous one, which by its elasticity permits us to cultivate amply the soil which is

best worth cultivating; while at the same time, by insisting that due care be taken that even the poorest soil shall not lie waste and unprofitable, it escapes the most severe, perhaps the only, censure to which the old parish school was open.

CHAPTER V.

DR JOHN BROWN'S ESTIMATE OF A KINDLY JOKE—ONE OF AN INSPECTOR'S FIRST DUTIES—CASES IN POINT—WHY ONE SHOULD NOT GO TO BERLIN—"GLAD TO SEE YOUR BACK"—"HE DISNA KEN THERE'S TWA DEES"—A PILGRIM DEFINED—"A GUTSY BRUTE"—"ARE YE THE GOAVERMENT?"—MISTAKEN FOR SOME ONE ELSE.

I REMEMBER reading many years ago in Dr John Brown's preface to that charming volume of essays, 'Horæ Subsecivæ,' his advice to young medical practitioners: "Moreover, let me tell my young doctor friends that a cheerful face and step, and neckcloth, and buttonhole, and an occasional hearty and kindly joke, a power of executing and setting agoing a good laugh, are stock in our trade not to be despised. The merry heart does good like a medicine. Your pompous man and your selfish man don't laugh much, or care for laughter; it discomposes the fixed grandeur of the one, and has little room in the heart of the other, who is literally self-contained."

I think the inspector may profitably take the advice. I have often been guilty of deliberately "executing and setting agoing a good laugh" in a school, with no sacrifice of dignity or injury to discipline. On one such occasion a somewhat pompous friend, to whom I mentioned an incident of this kind, asked if it was not a little undignified to do so. I replied that I felt no need of imported dignity, and did not practise it; that the office was sufficiently hedged round with respect, and that any attempt to add to it was not only unnecessary but injurious.

One of the first duties of an inspector is to put teacher and pupils at their ease, if the best results are to be got at. During the first or second year of my service I went to examine a female school in Auchterless, the correspondent for which was the Rev. Dr Gray, himself an old teacher, of a hearty and impulsive nature, the kindliest of men, and one whose career, from the plough-stilts through a phenomenally successful university course to a distinguished position in the Church of Scotland, is one of which any man might be proud. He told me, before entering the school, that the teacher had never been under inspection before, and was exceedingly nervous. He asked me to bear this in mind. I found this account

correct. Not only was the teacher nervous, but it was evident that, as usual, her nervousness had communicated itself to the children, who were ill at ease. Seeing this, I made some joke —I quite forget what it was—probably a very small one, but it was enough to produce a hearty laugh from both teacher and pupils, and show them that I was not a positive ogre. Dr Gray, whom I had never met till that morning, seeing my object, joined in and increased the laughter by giving me a sounding slap on the shoulder, adding, "Man, you're a fine fellow!" I hope this incident may be considered worthy of mention as having in it an element of humour, and as illustrating the kindly and impulsive character of Dr Gray, rather than a clumsy attempt on my part at performing the difficult operation of gracefully patting one's own back.

I was reminded lately, in a letter from a most successful lady teacher in one of the Edinburgh Merchant Company schools, of the first occasion on which, upwards of twenty years ago, she had, as a little girl, undergone the terror of a first inspection in a country school in Aberdeenshire. She was a pupil in the school, and had been taught by a nervous teacher to regard an inspector as a terribly severe personage, and, when

the dreaded day came, was in a state of abject terror. It fell to her lot, she told me, to read the verse from "Bingen on the Rhine,"—

"There's another, not a sister," &c.

When she had read it I gravely asked her who that other was, to which she tremblingly answered, "His sweetheart, sir." She said that my laughter at her answer put her considerably at her ease, and changed her childish ideas of an inspector.

She said that I asked another question in geography, "What river is Berlin on?" accompanied by a hope that she had never been there. She answered correctly, that it was on the Spree. I then asked her what she thought I meant by hoping she had never been there, to which she replied that it was not good for any one to be "on the spree." She says that I laughed again and made her feel quite comfortable.

Incidents like these prove that Dr John Brown's maxim, that "a kindly joke is stock-in-trade of a medical man not to be despised," applies also to a school inspector.

Nervousness on the day of inspection is not confined to young girls who are passing through

the ordeal for the first time. I remember a teacher, upwards of fifty years of age, whose school I had often visited, and always found in excellent order, confessing to nervousness in a somewhat humorous way. The relation between him and me was one of mutual confidence and respect. I knew that he was a superior scholar and an excellent teacher, and he knew that this was my opinion. After the inspection, which was as usual highly satisfactory, when I bade him good-bye he said, "Good-bye," adding, "There is no man, Mr Kerr, whose face I am better pleased to see than yours, but I am always glad to see your back."

In spite of many years of successful experience and hearty commendation, the inspection day was still a burden which he was glad to shake from his shoulders.

But, besides being nervous, children may be dull and listless as the result of spiritless teaching. In such circumstances a joke or an intentionally absurd question has an awakening effect which is entirely salutary, and, if the experience of my colleagues in the inspectorate is the same as mine, they sometimes come off second best. Once by way of stimulant I asked a somewhat sleepy history class which of the four Georges

wore the largest hat, and a boy, who had not till then opened his mouth, replied, "Him that had the biggest heid." The class woke up. In another school, and in similar circumstances, a boy on being asked where the river Dee was, answered correctly that it was in Aberdeenshire. Assuming quite a serious look, I asked him if he was not mistaken, adding that I thought the Dee was in Kirkcudbright and flowed into the Solway Firth. He was a bashful boy and made no reply. To give the class a needed fillip I appealed to them to settle whether the boy or I was right. To give a verdict against the inspector was of course not to be thought of, and there was silence for a time, but at last a boy put his hand to his mouth and said to his neighbour in a stage whisper, not meant for, but which reached, my ear, "He disna ken there's twa Dees."

There are few children so stupid that their intelligence cannot be tapped if a suitable subject is chosen and a right method adopted. It is told of an inspector that in the examination of a class in easy arithmetic he observed that one boy had not answered a single question correctly. Wishing to discover if the boy was hopelessly stupid he unintentionally "set agoing a good laugh" against himself by one

of his questions. The school was in a fishing village, and the question was on a subject with which he supposed (and correctly as it turned out) the boy was familiar. "Suppose," the inspector said, "there was a salmon that weighed ten pounds, and it was to be sold at twopence a-pound, what would the salmon be worth?" To this the boy at once replied, "It wudna be worth a curse."

Such experiences are not confined to Scotland. An English inspector, when testing the intelligence with which reading was taught, asked the meaning of the word pilgrim which occurred in the lesson, and got for reply that a pilgrim was a man who went from place to place. "Well," he replied, "you are so far quite right, but you might tell me something more about him. For example, I am here to-day [let us suppose Lancashire], I go to Accrington to-morrow, Blackburn next day, and Todmorden next. Am I a pilgrim?" "Oh no, sir," said the little girl with unconscious innuendo; "a pilgrim is a *good* man."

A Scottish colleague, in dealing with a reading lesson on natural history where it was said that the cow is a graminivorous animal, asked the meaning of that big word, and was told that it

was grass-eating. He then asked what an animal that ate flesh would be called, and promptly came the answer, "Carnivorous." Pushing his inquiries still further, he asked what an animal that ate both grass and flesh would be called. No reply for a considerable time. To help them towards an answer he pointed out that graminivorous was eating grass, carnivorous, eating flesh, and that an animal that eats *everything*, both grass and flesh, would be what? "A gutsy brute," was the reply. This recalls an answer given in a lesson on religious knowledge, the subject being the "wise and foolish virgins." The teacher asked what were the two classes into which the virgins were divided, and got from a girl, whose religious knowledge and natural history had got mixed, the answer, "Vertebrate and invertebrate."

I have some reason to suspect that I was not on all occasions as fastidious as to necktie, buttonhole, and general "get up" as Dr John Brown thinks incumbent on young doctors. For on one occasion, when my knowledge of Aberdeenshire was very imperfect, the minister of Rhynie, Mr Anderson, whose parish school I was to visit, wrote to say that I should travel by rail to Gartly, and that his servant would

meet me with a conveyance. I took his advice and arrived at the station comfortably dressed in winter costume, roughish greatcoat and wide-awake hat. I saw a gig at the station, the driver of which was evidently on the outlook for some one. He looked at me, but it was quite clear that I did not come up to his expectation of the person he was sent to meet. I fancy he expected to see a person faultlessly apparelled, and with at any rate the finishing touch of a tall hat. While he kept looking round for such a person, and quite overlooking me, I went up to him and asked if he came from the manse of Rhynie. "Yes," he replied, in a tone in which combined respect and disappointment were quite evident, and with a glance at my wideawake hat, "Are ye the Goaverment?" I said I was, and got into the gig. I felt, however, that I had seriously lowered his respect for a Government official.

An experience a few days later led me to suspect that in the matter of dress I was possibly somewhat below par. My work for a fortnight or so was in the neighbourhood of Huntly, which I intended to make my headquarters for the time. I was then busy writing my essay for the Burney prize, open to all Cambridge graduates of not

more than three years' standing, and wishing to avoid the bustle and noise of a hotel, I decided to take private lodgings. Suitable quarters were recommended to me—two comfortable rooms in a quiet part of the town. I said to the landlady that they would suit me very well, and asked if I could have them. "How long," she asked, "will you be wanting them for?"

"A fortnight or so," I replied.

"Ah!" she answered; "I never let my rooms for less than a month."

"I am sorry for that. They would suit me nicely, but I cannot possibly stay for a month," and I made a step towards the door.

Not wishing to have the rooms unlet, she turned an inquisitive eye on me, and said, "Will you be much in the house when you are here?"

Amused at the question, and beginning to fence, I said, "I shall be both in and out a good deal."

"Will you be out much at night?"

"Not much, and at any rate not very late."

Failing to make much headway by these questions, she went direct to the point. "What will you be doing when you are here?"

Fencing was no longer possible, and when I told her my business in Huntly, she said with many apologies, "Oh, you'll get the rooms for as long or as short as you like; but I saw that some folk were coming to give some concerts here, and I thought you might be one of them."

CHAPTER VI.

GRATUITOUS VISITS AND THEIR RESULTS—INSPECTION BEFORE THE CODE—ACT OF 1861 FOR INCREASE OF SALARIES OF PARISH TEACHERS AND REMOVAL OF THE INCOMPETENT—AN AMUSING CASE—"I JIST FUSHED TOO MICH."

I HAVE said that we were not going about like roaring lions with devouring tendencies. We had time to visit, and did visit, many schools which were not in receipt of grants. Those interested in the success of any school had only to ask for inspection and they got it, if other engagements made it possible. Many, many schools, badly ventilated, miserably furnished, and poorly taught, have I visited in the wilds of Inverness, Ross, Sutherland, Caithness, Orkney, and Shetland, for which no grant was claimed or could be paid, simply to carry out the instruction given to inspectors to furnish information respecting the state of education in particular districts. Probably some may have difficulty in believing that there could be so

much of the milk of human kindness in either Department or inspector as is implied in these purely gratuitous visits. Incredible as it may seem, it is solid fact. But these gratuitous visits were far from fruitless. While many of the teachers were old and hopelessly below certificate mark, there were not a few on whom kindly encouragement had a quickening effect, and who, when the possibility of a certificate was suggested to them, set to work pluckily and gained the coveted parchment which they had thought quite beyond their reach. Instances of this kind occurred in every one of the counties I have named. I need scarcely add that they were all most grateful. I never more fully realised that kind words cost little and are worth much.

During the first three or four years of my service the method of examination was very simple. There was a delightful absence of blue pencils, standards, and examination schedules. But though it was simple, it must not be inferred that it was necessarily slipshod or ineffective. On the contrary, it was thorough, and brought out clearly the strong and weak points of a school, simply because in the absence of a prescribed minimum of attainment up to which

it was necessary to go, and beyond which there was no strong inducement to go, both teacher and inspector had more elbow-room and more free play. I do not mean to say that this absolute freedom of action was always turned to the best account, or that it was not possible for both teacher and inspector to scamp their work, but I do say that a teacher whose heart was in his work gave instruction under healthier conditions and with greater efficiency from feeling that he was free to do what he thought best for those under his charge; free to take account of, and adapt his teaching to, varying degrees and kinds of ability; free to minister to the capacity of those who were "gleg at the uptak'," instead of making them mark time with those of duller mood. But it may be asked, What about teachers whose hearts were not in their work, and who had neither standards nor payment by results to keep them up to the mark? Did they not become backsliders and inefficient? No! for they knew that a report on each school was published in a blue-book (I forget at what time this was discontinued); that an entry was made on their certificates at every inspection; that their certificates were sent to the Department for revision every five years,

and, according as the entries were favourable or the reverse, were raised to a higher grade or left unchanged; and that a rise in grade meant a rise in payment, which ranged from £10 to £30 a-year, and was made directly to the teacher, who was, so far as these payments were concerned, the servant of the State, instead of being, as now, the servant of the school board or managers. This in all ordinary cases was sufficient to secure reasonable effort.

But what about the inspector whose heart was not in his work, for it cannot be claimed that he is necessarily of different clay? Well, the plain answer is that, then as now, he could within pretty wide limits scamp his work if he chose. I feel warranted, however, in saying that an inspector of average conscientiousness and capacity could, under the old and simple system, leave a school with as distinct an impression of what was good or weak in it, and give as healthy an impulse towards improvement, as under the more elaborate system of the earlier Codes.

Meanwhile, as these fixed grants were scarcely ever withheld, and were rapidly increasing with the increase in the number of schools, while the efficiency of both instruction and inspection,

especially on the other side of the Tweed, was more than doubted, some change became necessary, and hence in 1862 we got that best-abused of all educational measures, the Revised Code of Mr Lowe, afterwards Lord Sherbrooke.

After the passing of the Act of 1861, already referred to, which increased the salaries and provided for the removal of incompetent parochial teachers by an appeal to the sheriff, a number of cases of dismissal fell to my share, all of which, except one, I succeeded in settling to the satisfaction of the heritors on the one hand and the teachers on the other. As a rule, I found the heritors disposed to act kindly, even when incompetence was unquestionable and not altogether blameless. The teachers naturally wished to make as good a bargain as possible, and usually asked larger retiring allowances than the heritors thought right to grant, but, by small concessions on both sides, satisfactory settlements were arrived at, except, as I have said, in one case where not incompetence but deliberate neglect of duty and contumacy were in question, and dismissal without retiring allowance was the only possible course.

The most amusing case I had to deal with was in Sutherland, where the teacher, a respect-

able hale old man of upwards of seventy years of age, straight as a rush and active as a ghillie, had been in charge for nearly forty years, and for about twenty of them had done practically no work. His pupils had simply left him — an arrangement which had his full acquiescence, as it left him free to indulge his taste for fishing, in which his skill and liking were well matched. The Duke of Sutherland's factor, anxious to avoid even the appearance of harshness, was willing to give him the whole of his old statutory salary as a pension, and the continued occupancy of the dwelling-house, rent free; but failing to get the old man's acceptance, he requested me to try if I could bring him to reason. I called and found him at home. He was a bachelor. The schoolroom was a receptacle of all sorts of lumber, and on the solitary desk, which had evidently not been used for years, domestic articles of all kinds were lying, and among them a couple of fishing-rods and a fishing-basket. I introduced the subject gently, and pointed out to him that the terms proposed were much more liberal than he could expect if an appeal should be made to the sheriff.

"But it is," he replied, "no fault of mine that I have no scholars. I am strong and well, and

able and ready to teach them if they would come to me, and I could walk up the river for miles and fush all day as well as any heritor among them. Why should I resign?"

"I know," I replied, "that you are a capital fisherman, but as all the teaching in the parish for twenty years past has been done in a well-attended General Assembly school, while you have had no scholars, the sheriff would be quite sure to pronounce you incompetent, and in that case you would not get more than two-thirds of your salary and no dwelling-house."

"But," he rejoined, "I *have* had scholars within the last twenty years."

"Have you really? How long is it since you had scholars?"

"Well, it will be about twelve years or so."

"How many had you twelve years ago?"

"Oh, four, and sometimes three, and two and the like of that, but it's not me that wud be driving them away. They wud just be going of their own wull, and it wass not my fault whatefer. I wud be ready to teach them if they wud come to me."

After further talk, which need not be detailed, I got him at last into what seemed a yielding mood, and produced an agreement, with which I had

been furnished, embodying the terms mentioned, and asked him to sign it. I handed him the pen, which he accepted reluctantly, and I thought I had gained my point. But the *ad vitam aut culpam* tenure of his office recurred to him, and throwing down the pen angrily, he said, "Why should I resign when I am in good health, and able and wulling to teach, and no fault can be laid to my charge? Wull the Duke not give me £5 more as he did to my neighbour in the next parish?"

"No," I replied; "you cannot get more, and will certainly get less and no dwelling-house, if it goes before the sheriff." He read the document once more, shook his head doubtfully, and looking earnestly in my face, said, "Is it the goot advice you'll be giving me?"

"Yes; I certainly advise you to sign it for your own sake."

He took up the pen again, and with another shake of his head he wrote his name very slowly, and with several halts during the operation indicative of a still possible refusal. When it was at last finished, and the document transferred to my pocket, I was tempted to find out his own real explanation of the desertion of his pupils, and said, "Some people say that your fishing had a

good deal to do with the falling away of the school."

"Well," he replied frankly (now that a signed resignation removed all danger), "I wud not jist like to deny altogether that it may have probably done some injury to the attendance."

"But," I rejoined, "many say that it was entirely owing to the fishing."

"Oh, that wud be saying jist too mich, but I did like the fushin' better than the teachin'."

"You fished a good deal, of course, in the morning and evening and during the holidays?"

"Oh yes," with a sly twinkle; "and sometimes when I should have been teachin'."

"Not surely during school hours?"

"Yes, it's the God's truth I did," with increasing frankness; "I did fush too mich. When the river wud be in good trum I wud often be giving the boys a holiday or two. Oh yes, I did fush too mich, that's the God's truth."

CHAPTER VII.

THE REVISED CODE AN INJURY TO SCOTTISH EDUCATION—THE "BEGGARLY ELEMENTS" SUPREME—INTELLIGENCE DISREGARDED — UNFAIR TO SCOTLAND BECAUSE BASED EXCLUSIVELY ON THE CHARACTER OF ENGLISH SCHOOLS — EDUCATION LEVELLED "DOWN," NOT "UP"—MANY TEACHERS AND SOME INSPECTORS EDUCATIONALLY DEMORALISED BY IT — A PROOF THAT ENGLISH OFFICIALS DID NOT KNOW SCOTTISH SCHOOLS.

FOR any but educationists a disquisition on the Revised Code as injurious to Scottish education has probably little interest, but in a book of educational reminiscences some reference to it is necessary. I give this as a warning to the lay-reader who may wish to escape being bored.

In 1872 Lord Young's Act was passed, a separate Scottish Department was instituted, and Scotland got for herself a code of greater elasticity and generally higher educational aims. We got rid of the Revised Code, which even in its merely formal application to Scotland did great harm, and retarded, if it did not in some important respects actually throw back, Scottish education

for ten or twelve years. It said, "Thus far shalt thou go"; but too many teachers completed Canute's command by practically adding, "and no farther," which is not, and should not be, found in any code. They said it too with a sincerity which Canute only pretended to have, and with a power which Canute knew he had not, and they consequently succeeded where he failed. It is now ancient history, and no shred of it will ever be restored. Its introduction into Scotland, however, deserves a few remarks, though in making them I depart somewhat from the intention I have expressed of avoiding technical topics. Let us give it any little credit it deserves. In England, and in some parts of Scotland also, educational reform was needed. It increased regularity of attendance, and it must be granted that if, under it, the majority of English children mastered the "beggarly elements" solidly and well even in a mechanical way, it did more than ever had been done before. But the remedy was violent and educationally barbarous. Its plan was inherently mechanical and therefore bad. England had little of a proud past in elementary education that could serve as a foundation for a solid superstructure, but even that little was absolutely ignored.

In the Revised Code reading, writing, and

arithmetic for a considerable time stood severely alone. It is difficult to believe that for five long years the only educational pabulum provided for English elementary schools was the three R's in their barest form, with bills of parcels as the loftiest aim in arithmetic. There was no suggestion about intelligence, composition, grammar, geography, or history. Teachers were not only tempted, but — being like other people merely human — practically forced by the pecuniary conditions of the Code to aim at, and be satisfied with reaching, a sordid minimum of attainment in the "beggarly elements," in which there was not necessarily a ray of intelligence. The clever child was allowed to dawdle and mark time because he was sure to pass, and so his energy was deadened because deprived of the healthy stimulus which a consciousness of making progress gives, while the dullard was drilled beyond his power of reception and to his injury. Inspectors were no doubt told that every school was to be judged as hitherto by its religious, moral, and intellectual merits, but this judgment unfortunately had not the effective sanction of possible increase or reduction of grant except in extreme cases. In other words, the highest grant might be, and often was, earned in the most

unintelligent and mechanical way, the intellectual life and tone of the school being wholly unmeasured. While this indictment is severe as to the treatment England received, it is infinitely more severe in regard to Scotland, whose past was the envy not only of England but of most other civilised nations, and which had such a splendid basis as the old parish schools afforded for an educational reform, suitable alike for the dull and the clever. This was entirely ignored, and there was substituted for it a measure which, even in skilful hands, could with difficulty be rescued from a dreary, wooden dead-level.

The second indictment against the Revised Code is that it was imposed on Scotland entirely on the result of inquiry into the condition of elementary English schools. It was apparently assumed either (1) that Scottish and English ordinary schools were similar in respect of the character and extent of the education given, or (2) that Scotland was so unimportant, such a mere pendicle to England, that her claim to a separate hearing could not be allowed, and that she ought not to make a wry face at the educational pabulum which was thought suitable for her bigger sister. Both assumptions were excessively irritating. The first implied absolute ignorance of our educational

history. In England national education was but of yesterday, in Scotland it was over two hundred years old. In England scarcely anything beyond the "beggarly elements" was taught; in Scotland lads went straight from the village school to the university. The English national and the Scottish parish teacher presented the same contrast. The former had never set foot within a university; the latter was often, and in several counties invariably, a graduate.

If the first assumption is to be charged against ignorance of Scottish education, the second must be attributed to unfairness and an unwarrantable desire for uniformity. For facility of administration uniformity is doubtless desirable, but it may be bought too dear, if by adopting it we throw into the background those higher branches, from the coincident teaching of which the elementary ones were not shown to have materially suffered, and which had placed Scotland in the van of educated nations. It is impossible to defend the policy which selected the lower standard as that to which the higher was to be assimilated. Surely the policy ought to have been one of levelling up and not of levelling down. Scotsmen felt that their cheap and comparatively liberal education had done too much good work for them to

acquiesce in its being absorbed into a system, the inferiority of which was admitted by all whose opinion was worth having. It is not too much to say that, up to the separation of the Scottish from the English Department, this "sauce for the goose sauce for the gander" policy was persistently and injuriously followed.

I have always thought it a proud tribute to Scottish education that, while the Revised Code was at once applied to England in full detail, we were exempted from its financial operation for the ten years of its existence. This exemption, however, did not wholly deprive it of its pernicious influence in respect of educative aim. The examination schedule and tabulation of results were in too many cases constantly before the teacher's eye, and created an unhealthy thirst for high percentage of pass as being the most quotable test of efficiency, while, at the same time, it fostered a comparative disregard of intelligence and a general narrowing of view. A number of the best parish schools pluckily declined to follow the multitude of devout worshippers in the temple of the new percentage divinity, and kept alive with creditable success the traditional aim of higher work; but I think it is beyond question that, in respect of the education by which the

best brain in our ordinary schools can be utilised, Scotland during these ten years stood still if it did not go back. That it did fall back in some districts is unquestionable. Among teachers of narrow views there was a strong tendency to consider inspection and examination over as soon as the standard subjects were disposed of. Less anxiety was shown to bring under notice the higher branches taught, and it was sometimes necessary to ask for what was formerly volunteered with something akin to ostentatious but healthy pride. I have had cases in which was shown such a consuming zeal for a high pass, as, had it extended over the whole field of school work, would in a short time have resulted in collapse from sheer exhaustion. Over one or two failures in arithmetic I have witnessed a piteous wail and a shedding of tears by a female teacher, in whose breast a lamentable want of animation and intelligence, weak geography, and weaker grammar, awoke neither shame nor sorrow. Such cases, I am glad to say, were very rare, and even for them it may be charitably pleaded that they had yielded to a temptation that might have been found too strong for many of us. The Revised Code demoralised many such teachers, and, I fear,

some inspectors, by putting them on vicious educational lines. It is matter for thankfulness, and highly creditable to our teachers, that they have so quickly and to such a large extent got rid of its unwholesome tendency.

It contained one obnoxious provision, which, more than any other, aroused the ire of Scottish parents and teachers alike—viz., that none but the children of those who supported themselves by manual labour, or small shopkeepers of similar social position, could earn for their school a share in the grant. The insertion of such a condition was due to absolute ignorance of Scottish schools. The framers of the Code did not know that in Scotland the sons and daughters of the mechanic and the merchant, the labourer and the laird, were taught in the same classes and sat on the same benches. They had no experience of the healthy influence of the admixture in our schools of pupils of widely different social position. Their view was purely an English one. The gap between elementary school and university in England was an unbridged gulf on the score of both education and expense: in Scotland the transition from the ordinary school to the university was easy to brains and perseverance. So little was this realised in England that Mr (afterwards

Lord) Lingen, then secretary to the Department, a man of singular ability and eminently just, had a correspondence of considerable length with the managers of Kirkwall Burgh School, the headmaster of which had advertised for pupils wishing such an education as would fit them to enter the university, the army, or civil service. Mr Lingen held that it was "simply idle" to say that a school in which mathematics and advanced Latin, Greek, and French were taught could be called a school for the working classes, and eligible for grants under the Code. The case was referred to me. I was asked to make such inquiry as would enable the Department to come to a decision. I made a census of the parents of the children attending the school, and sent up a list of the pupils and the occupations of their parents, showing that a large proportion were the children of working men. This list was signed as correct by several members of the Town Council. Mr Lingen was satisfied, and with characteristic fairness authorised payment of the grant.

So far as those points which respond to the test of inspection are concerned, this school was pretty much of the same type as many of the best parish schools.

CHAPTER VIII.

EFFECTS OF KINDLY ENCOURAGEMENT AND WORDS IN SEASON —REV. DR MACKENZIE OF KINGUSSIE AND EDUCATION IN THE NORTH—SYMPATHETIC PATIENCE OF TEACHERS OF THE BLIND AND DUMB—ABNORMAL DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIAL FACULTIES.

No reminiscences in an inspector's life are so pleasant as those in which he is reminded of some kindly remark he had made at or after an inspection to a boy or girl of superior ability—a remark made casually and long forgotten by himself, but which, unknown to him, had acted as a living and permanent force in moulding character, awakening healthy ambition, and giving direction to a life. I have had many such experiences, and could name not a few men and women who have been stimulated to exertion by a passing word of commendation little thought of by me at the time, and long since forgotten, but which had, as results, brilliant careers at both Scottish and English universities. A lady re-

minded me lately that I had said to her brother, a boy in an Aberdeen country school, who had made a very good appearance in Latin, "My boy, you ought to go to College, you are sure to do well there." The remark took root. He persuaded his mother to let him go to college, and he is now a very eminent scholar, and fellow and tutor of his college in Cambridge. Another pupil in an Aberdeen parish school to whom I awarded a school bursary was thought to be qualified for the learned professions from my directing the attention of his teacher to the excellence of his examination papers. He too went to the university, and is now fellow of his college in Cambridge. I often regret that I did not more frequently utilise the vital force that lies hid in a word of kindly encouragement, and I venture to advise the younger inspectors, who have probably many years of work before them, to bear in mind and turn to account a power of influencing for good the lives of pupils who pass under their review, which is, I am convinced, much greater than they probably imagine.

In this connection I am tempted to refer to another of these half-forgotten but easily recalled incidents. I was lately reminded by an old and

valued friend, the Rev. Dr Mackenzie of Kingussie, of a conversation I had with him nearly forty years ago, to which at the time I attached no such importance as to think it should ever be recalled. In the autumn of last year we were discussing school topics, and in contrasting the educational condition of the Highlands early in the 'Sixties with its present position, I remarked that education in the north owed immeasurably more to him than to any man I knew. While with characteristic modesty he disclaimed the well-merited compliment, he said that all he had done had its origin in the conversation referred to. On my asking for an explanation, he said that soon after he had been elected minister of Lochcarron, he found education at a very low ebb in that parish; his congregation, as usual in the Highlands, very much reduced by the Disruption of 1843; his whole environment so unpromising, and affording so little opportunity for any one who wished to do a man's useful work, that he had thought of resigning his charge, and seeking a wider field of usefulness in Australia or elsewhere. He said that I strongly dissuaded him from this, and advised him to look around and consider in what direction, ministerial or secular, he could promote the interests of the

people among whom his lot was cast; that education was a subject to the stimulation of which he could profitably devote all the energy at his command; and that he would soon find, in this and other lines, such abundant occupation as would satisfy him that he was honourably earning his stipend of £150, although but few attended his church services. This advice he said took permanent hold of him, and he at once turned his attention to Slumby and Janetown, two hamlets in his parish inhabited by a very wretched class of crofters, many of whose children did not attend school at all, and none with useful regularity, mainly from want of suitable clothing. He set about raising funds to supply this want, and succeeded so well that, before his removal from Lochcarron, the parish school became a flourishing institution. He has been thirty-four years minister of Kingussie, where, under his fostering care, the public school is, if not the best, certainly one of the very best schools in the north of Scotland. It is attended by pupils from a wide circuit all round, and from Skye, Uist, and other islands of the Outer Hebrides. But his efforts have not been confined to his own parish. In every educational movement within his reach he has taken a prominent, judicious,

and effective part. His untiring and whole-hearted energy in founding bursaries leading from the ordinary to the secondary schools, his influence on the County or Secondary Education Committee, as well as on the Trust for Education in the Highlands and Islands, and the number of students who, thanks to him, have gone to the university and earned distinction, furnish a record which has, I believe, no parallel in Scotland. Of Dr Mackenzie, as appropriately as of any man I know, it may be said, "*Si monumentum quæris circumspice.*"

I have made the acquaintance of almost every variety of teacher, some brimming over with enthusiasm about special methods as the only good ones, others insisting on special subjects as the only important ones. Enthusiasts generally are successful in giving an impulse, often, no doubt, a lopsided one, but still an impulse in an amiable if not entirely practical direction; but there are two classes of teachers with whom I have often come into contact, and for whom I have great respect and even admiration, the teachers of blind and deaf-mute children. They have in quite an exceptional degree (what all teachers who are to produce the best results must have) untiring patience and sympathy with

their pupils' difficulties. I do not recollect having met any teacher of the deaf or blind who was not a model of sympathetic patience. This remark is almost unnecessary, inasmuch as their possession of these qualities might be inferred from their having chosen this kind of teaching as their life-work. They may have thought that it would be interesting, but they must have seen that it would be exceedingly difficult. This applies with greater force to the teacher of the deaf than to the teacher of the blind. It may be matter of opinion whether to be blind or to be deaf and dumb is the greater calamity, but, as a question of education, of mental health and balance, I am quite convinced that the deaf-mute is the greater sufferer. He is more difficult to teach and more isolated; a wider gulf than in the case of the blind separates him from continuous, interesting intercourse with his fellows. He can, no doubt, read, and, if of intellectual type, will reach a higher level of culture than the blind man, who may not have an attendant who can read to him as often as he wishes. But only relations or intimate friends of the deaf person will take the trouble to write, sign, or spell out on the fingers any but important matters. He has therefore little share

in the commonplace but interesting topics of daily life, which are as essential for mental as digestible food is for bodily health. Of him as of others it is true that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. By reading he will ameliorate the sadness of his life, but he will not get rid of the feeling of isolation, which is seldom the lot of the blind, who can freely take part in the interchange of opinions about subjects of general interest, which contribute so much, if not to culture, at any rate to the enjoyment of life. We accordingly find that the deaf-mute is usually a sadder, more suspicious, and less contented man than the blind. I have asked a good many blind persons whether they would prefer to be as they are or be deaf and dumb. The invariable answer, from both the cultured and the comparatively uneducated, has been that they would far rather be as they are. An old woman, who has been an inmate of Edinburgh Blind Asylum for about sixty years, put the matter in a nutshell in reply to my inquiry,—"The mind is aye fresh when the lugs are open."

The abnormal development of one sense or faculty, as in some sort a compensation for the absence of others, is well known. I have seen

two very striking examples of this in the same asylum. One was a boy and the other a girl, both completely blind, and both largely imbecile. The boy, who is now fourteen years of age, has an ear for music so abnormally developed that he possesses the rare talent of "absolute pitch." If he is taken into a room and a note is struck on a piano, he will at once name the note. Take him into another room where the piano is at a different pitch, and he will name any note that is struck. Further, if all the ten fingers are struck down at once on the keyboard of an organ or piano, he will begin at the top note and name downwards every note struck. One day this remarkable power was turned to good account. When one of the organ pupils was playing, the *swell-coupler* went out of order, and, when pulled out, caused several notes on that manual to cipher (sound) without depressing the keys. None of the students were able to distinguish the notes in the resulting discord. In their difficulty they sent for this semi-imbecile boy, who at once enlightened them and the defect was remedied.

The girl, who was eight or nine years of age, was an inmate for several years but was ultimately sent home as hopelessly unteachable, and yet

she had the remarkable faculty of being able to tell instantly on what day of the week any date that could be mentioned would fall. Three or four years ago, when the Lord High Commissioner (Marquess of Tweeddale) and his suite visited the asylum, I gave each of them a separate card of all the months of the year. To every date they mentioned the girl gave at once the day of the week on which it fell. I tried her with the dates of the three preceding years with the same results. She made only one slip, and immediately corrected herself. She has not been taught, for the best of all reasons that the teacher has not the slightest idea how she does it. When asked how she does it, she replies apparently in the most brainless tone, "I don't know."

CHAPTER IX.

OLD PARISH SCHOOLS — CANDLEMAS — CHANGED CUSTOMS — M. BIOT'S ESTIMATE—PARISH SCHOOLS' RELATION TO THE UNIVERSITY—FIRST SCOTTISH CODE—"NO USE PUMPING WHEN THE WELL'S DRY" — SCOTTISH AND ENGLISH GRADUATES COMPARED—A "STICKIT MINISTER."

SOME reference to the old parish schools and to some of the methods and customs that have long passed away is germane to these scholastic jottings. The contrast in respect of buildings and equipment between them and the schools erected by school boards is very striking. The modern demands for a certain number of square and of cubic feet per child were in many cases neither thought of nor provided. The desks were often double, the pupils facing each other —an arrangement admirably adapted for making discipline difficult by offering temptation to unnecessary talking and general restlessness. These desks were in many cases flat tables, which did not contribute to good penmanship. Steel pens

were not yet in general use, and the making and mending of quill pens made a considerable drain on the teacher's time. There was often even in large schools only one teacher, who, having many subjects to attend to, had recourse to various devices for saving time and securing efficiency. A boy well advanced in arithmetic would sometimes be placed beside one at a lower stage, the former being instructed to give assistance to the latter. By this plan the lower boy gained much, and the higher boy lost little if anything, inasmuch as there is no better method of getting a sound knowledge of a subject than by teaching it to others.

For the maintenance of discipline it was customary to employ an agency now, so far as I know, absolutely disused. A boy chosen by the teacher, and called a censor, was ordered to stand on a high form in a position commanding a view of the whole school, and call out the name of any pupil who was seen to be playing tricks on his neighbours, making a noise, or in any way breaking rules of discipline. The pupil so named was called up by the teacher and subjected to such punishment as was considered commensurate with the offence. This was a method of discipline in favour of which nothing

can be said. It was a confession of weakness on the part of the master, and aroused ill feeling among the other pupils against the unfortunate boy on whom was imposed the abominable task of "clyping" on his fellows. It furnished an ill-conditioned censor with a means of petty persecution of any schoolfellow whom he disliked, for he knew that no denial of misdemeanour by the accused would have weight against his authoritative accusation. It was in fact legalising what is universally and properly despised as one of the meanest and most sneaking characteristics whether of boy or man—that of betraying the delinquencies of comrades to those who have power to punish.

The observance of Candlemas as a holiday, which was in existence in my schoolboy days, has, I think, been entirely discontinued. On this day, February 2, the teacher occupied his usual seat at his desk, but it could not on this day be said—

"A man severe he was and stern to view."

On the contrary, an atmosphere of gaiety filled the room. It was by distinct recognition a holiday in the fullest sense. When the pupils were assembled the roll was called in the usual

way, but instead of each pupil answering "Here, sir," to his name and remaining in his place, he came up to the teacher's desk and deposited a gift varying, according to the means of the parents, from sixpence or a shilling to a crown. The boy and girl who made the largest contribution were called King and Queen. Oranges and gingerbread snaps were then distributed, and all went off on holiday.

This is perhaps the proper place to try to strike a fair balance between the merits and demerits of the old parochial system which up to 1872 had been in existence for over two centuries. That it had, like all things human, some demerits goes without saying. It had not been able to keep pace with the growth of the population, and its undoubted tendency was to give more than a fair share of attention to the clever pupils and to neglect the dull. That under it the majority were in many cases somewhat neglected was a serious defect, but on the other hand it is quite certain that universal perfection in the "beggarly elements" of the Revised Code, or in the demands of the earlier codes, would never have gained for Scotland the place she has always held as an educated nation, or enabled her sons to fight their way

to eminence in every walk of life at home and abroad. This will be thought by many a palliation, though not a complete defence, of comparative neglect of the duller pupils; but it is arguable that any excess of effort to lay hold of and utilise the best brain of the school is more worthy of imitation, and is of more patriotic tendency, than an absolutely equal distribution of attention between dull and promising pupils. Is it unreasonable to say that even the "failing leans to virtue's side"?

We have the testimony of an important witness, M. Biot, the famous French physicist, who resided for some time in Scotland:—

"The results of education are such that they strike with astonishment those who observe them for the first time. The Scots, poor, and inhabiting a country by no means fertile, have risen by their education and civilisation to the level of, and, if the lower orders are considered, have surpassed, a nation which is regarded as one of the most enlightened on the face of the earth. Wherever a Scotsman goes, the education he has received in the parish schools gives his mind a peculiar power of observation, and enables him to extend his view far beyond the range of objects which occupy the attention of

persons of the same social status who have not been so educated."

Some may regard this as a very friendly, perhaps an over-friendly, estimate, but that it represents with approximate accuracy what was the characteristic feature of Scottish parish schools will be admitted by all who have had means of forming an opinion on the subject. Since the Reformation we had theoretically in every parish, and frequently in point of fact, schools which in respect of quality and cost the sons of the poorest in the land could make, and did make, stepping-stones to the university. There is no county in Scotland that cannot furnish examples of this kind.

One of the most remarkable cases — though there are many others of similar type—is the parish school of Udny in Aberdeenshire, from which, under the management of Mr Bisset, there went direct to the university during the twelve years before 1826 a number of lads destined to earn name and fame in a considerable variety of directions. Among these were Sir James Outram, Lieutenant-General of the Indian army, distinguished for both military and literary ability; Joseph Robertson, an antiquary of almost unsurpassed reputation and a historical

scholar of whom Dean Stanley said that, though he had known all the eminent historians of his time, he never met one who walked in the past with such completeness of knowledge. To these may be added John Hill Burton, who is mentioned as a contemporary of Robertson's at school and college, though Udny is not definitely stated as the school in which he was educated; James Craigie Robertson, Canon of Canterbury, a scholar and historian of repute; George Smith of Chicago, one of the founders of that city, and the first white man who slept in Milwaukee.

Not unlike Udny is Strichen parish school, which is responsible for Sir Alexander Anderson, Mr Murison, county clerk of Aberdeenshire, and Mr Giles, Fellow of Emmanuel, Cambridge; and again Mortlach School in which Field-Marshal Sir Donald Stewart and Lord Mount-Stephen were educated. Farther south Mr Peace, also a fellow of his college in Cambridge, must be placed to the credit of Marykirk parish school, in Kincardineshire. From Lochwinnoch, in Renfrewshire, many students earned high distinction in Glasgow University, two of the best known being the late Rev. Dr Watson of Dundee and the Rev. Dr Patrick, Professor of

Biblical Criticism in Edinburgh, whose three colleagues in the Faculty of Divinity—Professors Flint, Taylor, and Kennedy—are all products of parish schools in the counties of Dumfries, Argyle, and Banff. To these can be added Mr Mackinnon, Professor of Celtic Languages in Edinburgh; Dr Patrick, Editor of 'Chambers's Encyclopedia'; and Mr Struthers, formerly my colleague, and now assistant-secretary to the Scottish Education Department, all of whom owe to country schools in Argyle and Ayr and Renfrew the education on the strength of which they have reached their present position. This list could be lengthened by such names as Drs George and Alexander Ogilvie, ex-head-masters of Watson's College, Edinburgh, and Gordon's College, Aberdeen.

The parish schoolboy has always been, and is now, most satisfactorily represented in English Universities, in the professoriate of all the Scottish universities, in high legal positions, in the Church, in Medicine, and in the school inspectorate. With schools having such a record nothing more than an extension on the same lines was needed to meet every want. Such an extension, with additions demanded by changed commercial and technical requirements,

is now the aim of the Scottish Education Department.

In the Highlands and outlying sparsely populated districts there were no doubt a considerable number of parish schools in which John Knox's ideal was entirely lost sight of, where reform was much needed and has now been, as far as possible, made. It would not be safe to say that the schools that now have taken the place of the old parish schools send as many pupils direct to the university as were sent forty years ago. I know some parishes from which formerly lads went every year to the university, but from which no student has gone direct for the last twenty years. The reasons for this are threefold: (1) There is now what there was not formerly, a hard preliminary examination to pass in order to admission; (2) there is a large increase in the number of higher class schools and departments, to which admission is gained through the agency of burgh and county secondary committees, where the requisite preparation can be had; (3) there are now many more openings in commerce and manufactures for which university training is not imperative.

It is a fortunate circumstance that the Scottish Act of 1872 is as widely different from the

English Act of 1870 as the respective countries are in educational tradition. The English Act was one dealing professedly with elementary education. The Scottish Act was to provide education "for the *whole* people of Scotland." The word "elementary" is not found within the four corners of the Act. The decision by Mr Justice Wills in the Court of Queen's Bench, that it is illegal in England to use the rates to pay for higher education, does not affect Scotland. Such an action as that raised by the auditor of the London School Board could not with any chance of success be raised in Scotland. In the Scottish Act the grand tradition of direct connection between the parish school and the university was not lost sight of. The necessity of providing for all children a certain minimum of elementary education might make, and to a considerable extent has made, this aim more difficult of attainment, but the surrender of advanced education was not to be thought of. Hence the higher pitch of the Scottish Code in advanced subjects, while accuracy and solidity of attainment in elementary subjects were at the same time sufficiently safeguarded by grants graded according to merit.

In the preparation of the first Scottish Code,

and subsequent modifications of it, I had a large share, the secretary, Sir Francis (afterwards Lord) Sandford, honouring me by frequent consultations and much correspondence both private and official in connection with it. In the rearrangement of districts and staff, in drafting instructions for the inspection of higher class schools and other matters, I was much gratified by having my assistance asked and accepted. I need not say that to have enjoyed the confidence of one who had done so much for education as Lord Sandford is one of the happiest memories of my official life.

In the English Code of 1870 reading, writing, and arithmetic stood alone, and no provision was made under the head of ordinary subjects for intelligence, grammar, geography, or history. These were dealt with as special subjects. In the Scottish Code they were practically imperative, inasmuch as very considerable grants were earned for them as ordinary though not compulsory subjects. This was educationally good, but it made a very heavy addition to the work of the inspector, especially in the upper half of the school, where grammar and intelligent explanation of the reading lesson were part, and by far the heaviest part, of the reading test.

Reading in the higher classes was thus removed from the category of "beggarly elements," and became what is now in the merit certificate the subject *English*. The question was not whether the three higher classes could read creditably, had had the lesson intelligently explained, and had been taught grammar on good lines with satisfactory results in the class *as a whole*, but whether each individual pupil had imbibed sufficient grammar and intelligence to secure a pass in reading. There was nothing for it but to subject each pupil to this triple test, extract from him, sometimes laboriously, the requisite amount of attainment, and after weighing the claims of good reading as a make-weight against shaky grammar and doubtful intelligence, decide, from an average of the three factors, whether the grant had been earned or forfeited. Further, specific subjects were open to the three highest classes, and teachers, in their eagerness for large grants and higher reputation, presented pupils in great numbers. It was not unusual to have four or five subjects — such as Latin, French, physical geography, and magnetism — taken up by different sets of pupils in the same school, and all subjected to individual examination. From all this some idea may be formed of the

exhausting character of the inspector's work in these circumstances.

I remember a case in which I was obliged to recommend a refusal of the grant for intelligence and grammar in the lower, and for geography and history in the upper, half of a school. The teacher was a highly educated graduate, with ability to "get up" as much of any specific subject, however complex, as could earn the payment offered for it, but whose love of a large grant was fairly on a par with his teaching ability. He had evidently (though I did not know it till after the inspection) carefully weighed from a grant-earning point of view the competing claims of general intelligence, geography, and history, as against specific subjects, and had decided to throw his weight into the scale of the latter, in the hope that such vague subjects as general intelligence, &c., would be more loosely assessed than the hard facts with which specific subjects deal. I found the grammar and intelligence of one class barely passable, and of the other exceedingly poor. Geography and history were of similar type. Knowing him to be an able man and a very successful teacher, I was unwilling to recommend the refusal of both grants, unless I was quite sure that they

were justly forfeited. In this frame of mind I did my very best, struggling till I got into a state of vulgar heat in my efforts to extract the requisite amount of attainment, but completely without success. Thinking it possible that the children were either tired or timid, or that the teacher might have some more stimulative method than mine, I asked him (he stood by and had been a witness of my heroic but fruitless struggles) to try what he could make of them. With a coolness which was provokingly—or shall I say ungratefully—out of keeping with the energy I had been putting forth on his behalf, he replied, "Oh, there's no use pumping when the well's dry." Now, as he must have known that he had not devoted five minutes to the instruction necessary, and yet had seen the martyr-like devotion with which I had pumped energetically for nearly an hour to find ground for recommending payment, his conduct seemed to me unfeeling, lacking brotherly kindness and well-earned gratitude, and I accordingly refused the grants with an almost unholy joy.

The parish schoolmaster had as a rule more or less university education, and in some counties, as I have said, he was invariably a graduate. And here I think I am warranted in saying that

the average Scottish graduate is, on the score of sound education, in no way inferior and in many respects superior to the average pass graduate of Oxford or Cambridge. From my personal knowledge as one of the examiners for degrees in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and from what I know of the pitch of the pass degree in Cambridge, I have no hesitation in saying what will be corroborated by all who have had the same means of judging, that the Scottish degree represents a higher level and a broader basis of education than the English pass degree. It is also quite certain that the preliminary examination for entrance is much more difficult in Scotland than in England.

As to honours graduates, when England and Scotland are compared in respect of population, number of university students, the social class from which they come (in England mainly from the wealthy, in Scotland mainly from the lower middle), the schools which furnish the preliminary training, the success of Scottish in competition with English students for appointments in the Indian Civil Service, it is by no means evident that the Scottish honours graduate must lower his flag in presence of his English rival. M. Biot is probably right in thinking that much of

the success which attends the efforts of Scottish boys after they leave school and university is due to a habit of self-reliance which has been fostered by their early school training. Few of them are, so to speak, spoon-fed or cradled in the lap of luxury. Urged on by the spur of necessity, they are compelled, from the first, to trust to their own resources, and from this are developed breadth of view and adaptability to new and varying conditions, to meet which the training of the average English boy has not so fully prepared him.

Many of these Scottish graduates were not only well-educated men but good teachers. There were, however, a few notable exceptions. Some of them were "stickit ministers," and education would not have suffered had they been also "stickit" teachers. There was one with whom I did not come officially into contact, who was known by the disrespectful name of "Cocky," from his conceited bearing. An anecdote is told of him which, though well known in Aberdeenshire, has probably not obtained general currency farther south. His discipline had never been good, and with increase of years did not improve.

The generally received version is that there was a good fishing-stream in the neighbourhood

of the school where the older pupils were in the habit of amusing themselves regardless of breaches of discipline and regular attendance. On one occasion of the annual examination by the Presbytery this burn happened to be in good trim. The highest class knew that if Cocky—a licentiate of the Church—was allowed to get as far as religious knowledge in the examination, their fishing pastime would be unduly curtailed. This must not be, and they took measures accordingly. The reading lesson was gone through with propriety and success. Then came spelling, and here their flank movement was to be made. A boy in the middle of the class was asked to spell *redemption*. He failed, and the next, and the next, down to the bottom of the class, each boy ringing an ingenious and ludicrous change on the apparently unspellable word. The ministers were utterly astonished. Cocky was not less so. His face became very red, and turning to the top boy, from whom he had no doubt he would get a correct spelling, he said, "You spell it, sir," and the response was "K-O-K-Y, *redemption*," followed by a rush to the door with the whole class at his heels.

Instances of this kind are exceedingly rare, and they are little likely to recur.

CHAPTER X.

JAMES BEATTIE — LESSONS FROM A SHOEMAKER'S STOOL: "BAIRNS MAUN LIKE THEIR BOOKS" — "SHE HAS A DREADFU' MEMORY" — "READ AS WEEL'S YE CAN DO" — "WHAT! ARE YE KEEKIN'? — "HOO COULD I CHARGE FEES?" — "EH! MAN, BELL'S DEID."

I HAVE a very pleasing recollection of James Beattie, an old Aberdeen shoemaker, whose acquaintance I made, and of whose work in education I gave a sketch which appeared in 'Good Words' upwards of thirty years ago. As many of the present generation have not seen, and many who saw have doubtless forgotten it, I venture to reproduce it as probably not unworthy of a place among scholastic reminiscences.

LESSONS FROM A SHOEMAKER'S STOOL.

In the course of my wanderings I had the good luck not long ago to fall in with a very remarkable and interesting old man, James Beattie,

of Gordonstone, a village of about a score of houses, in the parish of Auchterless, in the north-east corner of Aberdeenshire. He is a shoemaker, but has conjoined with his trade the teaching of all the children in his neighbourhood. It is remarkable how largely the shoemaking profession bulks in the public eye in this respect. John Pounds, the Portsmouth cobbler, was the founder of Ragged Schools in England; and George Murray of Peterhead, also a shoemaker, formed the nucleus from which the Union Industrial Schools of that town have sprung. Many others might be mentioned. Probably scientific investigation may hereafter explain this affinity between leather and philanthropy.

Mr Beattie is now eighty-two years of age. For sixty of these he has been carrying on his labour of love, and he means to do so as long as he can point an awl or a moral, adorn a tale or a piece of calf-skin. He has sought no reward but that of a good conscience. None are better worthy of a recognition in 'Good Words' than the systematic unobtrusive doer of good deeds, and probably few will grudge James Beattie the honour.

While in his neighbourhood a friend of mine gave me such an account of him as made me

resolve to see him if possible. By making a start an hour earlier than was necessary for my regular duty, I had no difficulty in making out my visit to him. His workshop being pointed out to me—a humble one-storey house with a thatch roof, and situated in quite a rural district—I went up to the door and knocked.

I hope the three hundred and odd school-managers, with whom I am acquainted in the north of Scotland, will excuse me for saying here, that this ceremony—the knocking—ought always to be gone through on entering a school. It is not perhaps too much to say that, so far as I have observed, it is almost invariably neglected. The door is opened, and an unceremonious entrance is made, by which not only is the teacher made to feel—I know he feels it—that he is not the most important person there, which is not good; *but the pupils are made to see it*, which is very bad. I am aware that this is sometimes due to the fact that the teacher and managers are on the most familiar terms. It is not always so; and even when it is, I venture to think that the courtesy of a knock should be observed. I have never once, when I was alone, or when it depended on me, entered a school without knocking. This, however, by the way.

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I had got the length of knocking at James Beattie's door, which was almost immediately opened by a stout-built man under the middle size, with a thoroughly Scotch face, square, well-marked features, eyes small and deeply sunk, but full of intelligence and kindliness. The eyes, without having anything about them peculiarly striking, had a great deal of that quiet power for which I cannot find a better epithet than sympathetic. They are eyes that beget trust and confidence, that tempt you somehow to talk, that assure you that their owner will say nothing silly or for show; in short, good, sensible, kindly eyes. His age and leathern apron left me in no doubt as to who he was. I said, however, "You are Mr Beattie, I suppose?"

"Yes," he replied, "my name's James Beattie. Wull ye no come in oot o' the snaw? It's a stormy day."

"Perhaps," I said, "when you know who I am, you won't let me in."

"Weel, at present I dinna ken ony reason for keepin' ye oot."

I then told him who I was; that I was on my way to Auchterless Female School (about two miles off), that his friend Mr C—— had

been speaking to me about him, and that, as I was almost passing his door, I could not resist calling upon him, and having a friendly chat with one who had been so long connected with education. I added that I did not wish to see his school unless he liked, and that if he had any objections he was to say so.

"Objections!" he replied. "I never hae ony objections to see onybody that has to do wi' education. It has aye been a hobby o' mine, and I daur say a body may hae a waur hobby. You that's seein' sae mony schules will be able to tell me something I dinna ken. Come in, sir."

In his manner there was no fussiness, but a most pleasing solidity, heartiness, and self-possession. He did not feel that he was being made a lion of, and he evidently did not care whether he was or not. I went in, and as a preliminary to good fellowship asked him for a pinch of snuff, in which I saw he indulged. The house, which does double duty as a shoemaker's stall and schoolroom, is not of a very promising aspect. The furniture consists of a number of rude forms and a desk along the wall. So much for the schoolroom. In the other end are four shoemakers' stools occupied by their owners, lasts, straps, lap-stones, hammers, old

shoes, and the other accompaniments of a shoemaker's shop. Two or three farm-servants, whose work had been stopped by the snowstorm, had come in, either to pass an idle hour in talk or in the way of business.

There were only ten pupils present, a number being prevented by the snow and long roads. When I went in some of them were conning over their lessons in a voice midway between speech and silence, and one or two were talking, having taken advantage of the "maister's" going to the door to speak to me, and the noise called forth from Mr Beattie the order, "Tak' your bookies, and sit peaceable and dacent, though there's few o' ye this snawy day. Think it a', dinna speak oot; your neebours hear ye, and dinna mind their ain lessons."

This is, I think, very good: "Although there's few o' ye this snawy day," your responsibility is individual, not collective. Many or few, the object for which you are here is the same—viz., to learn your lessons and behave properly. The snowstorm has kept many away, but it furnishes no excuse for noise or idleness. The old man's "though there's few o' ye" thus involved a great principle that lies at the root of all true teaching.

The order was obeyed to the letter. James

pointed out a seat for me on one of the forms, took up his position on his stool, and he and I began to talk. I am tempted to give it, to the best of my recollection, in his simple Doric, which would lose much by translation.

"You will not be very well pleased," I remarked, by way of drawing him out, "about this fine new school which has just been opened at Badenscoth. It will take away a great many of your scholars."

"Oh, man!" he replied, "ye dinna ken me, or ye wudna say that. I hae just said a hunder times, when I heard o' the new schule, that I was thankfu' to Providence. Afore there was ony talk o' the new schule, I hae stude mony a time wi' my back to the fire lookin' at the bairnies when they were learnin' their lessons, and whiles takin' a bit glint up at my face—for I think some o' them like me—and I've said, 'Oh, wha'll mind thae puir creaturs when I'm awa'?' Ye ken," he continued, "I canna expect muckle langer time here noo. Ay, even if I werena an auld dune man, as I am, I wud hae been thankfu' for the new schule. I hae maybe dune as weel's I could, but a' my teachin', though it's better than naething, is no to be compared wi' what they'll get at a richt schule."

"It is quite true," I said, "that you labour under great disadvantages, having both to teach and attend to your work at the same time."

"Weel, it's no sae muckle that, as my ain want o' education."

"You have had a long education," I replied.

"That's just what a freen o' mine said to me ance, and I mind I said to him, 'That's the truest word ever yé spak. I've been learnin' a' my days, and I'm as fond to learn as ever.'"

"But how do you manage to teach and work at the same time?"

"Ye see," he replied, "when I'm teachin' the A B C, I canna work, for I maun point to the letters; but when they get the length o' readin', I ken fine by the sense, withoot the book, if they're readin' richt, and they canna mak' a mistak' but I ken't."

Well said by James Beattie! He has discovered, by common-sense and experience, the only true test of good reading, "by the sense without the book."

"In spite of your own want of education, however," I said, "I understand that you have old pupils in almost every quarter of the globe who are doing well, and have made their way in the world through what you were able to give

them. I have heard, too, that some of them are clergymen."

"Ay, that's true enough," he replied; "and some o' them hae come back after being years awa', and sat doon amang the auld shoon there whar they used to sit. And I've got letters frae some o' them, after ganging a far way, that were just sae fu' o' kindness and gude feelin', and brocht back the auld times sae keenly, that I micht maybe glance ower them, but I couldna read them oot. Ah, sir! a teacher and an auld scholar, if they're baith richt at the heart, are buckled close thegither, though the sea's atween them. At ony rate, that's my experience.

"See, sir," he continued, holding out a point of deer's horn, "there's a' I hae o' a remembrance o' ane that's in Canada, a prosperous man noo, wi' a great farm o' his ain. When he was at the schule here, he saw me makin' holes wider wi' a bit pointed stick, and he thocht this bit horn wud do't better,—and he wasna far wrang,—and he gied it to me. Weel, he cam' back years and years after, and I didna ken him at first. He had grown up frae being a bairn, no muckle bigger than my knee, to be a buirdly chield. I sune made oot wha he was; and as I was workin' and talkin' to him, I had occasion to use this bit horn.

'Gude hae me,' says he, 'hae ye that yet?' 'Ay,' said I, 'and I'll keep it as lang as I hae a hole to bore.'"

Returning to the subject of teaching, I said, "How do you manage after they have got the alphabet, and what books do you use?"

"Weel, I begin them wi' wee penny bookies; but it's no lang till they can mak' something o' the Testament; and when they can do that, I chuse easy bits oot o' baith the Auld and New Testaments that teaches us our duty to God and man. I dinna say that it's maybe the best lesson-book; but it's a book they a' hae, and ane they should a' read, whether they hae ither books or no. They hae 'collections' too, and I get them pamphlets and story-books; and when I see them gettin' tired o' their lessons, and beginning to tak' a look about the house, I bid them put by their 'collections,' and tak' their pamphlets and story-books. Ye ken, bairns maun like their books."

Well said again! "Bairns maun like their books,"—a necessity far from universally recognised, either by teachers or the makers of school-books. Many a healthy plant has been killed by being transplanted into an ungenial soil, and kept there; and many a promising school career has

been marred or cut short by books that "bairns couldna like."

"You teach writing, arithmetic, and geography, too, I suppose, Mr Beattie?"

"I try to teach writin' and geography; but ye'll believe that my writin's naething to brag o', when I tell ye that I learnt it a' mysel'; ay, and when I began to mak' figures, I had to tak' doon the Testament, and look at the 10th verse, to see whether the 0 or the 1 cam' first in 10. I can learn them to write a letter that can be read, and, ye ken, country folk's no very particular aboot its being like copperplate. Spellin's the main thing. It doesna mak' (matter) if a bairn can write like a clerk, if he canna spell. I can learn them geography far eneuch to understan' what they read in the newspapers; and if they need mair o't than I can gie them, and hae a mind for't, they can learn it for themsel's. I dinna teach countin'. Ony man in my humble way can do a' that on his tongue. At ony rate, I've aye been able. Besides, I couldna teach them countin'. Ye see, I maun leeve by my wark, and I'm thankfu' to say I've aye been able to do that; but I couldna do't if I was to teach them countin'. It wud mak' sic an awfu' break in my time. When my ain grand-

children hae got a' I can gie them, I just send them to ither schules."

"What catechism do you teach?" I asked.

"Ony ane they like to bring," he replied. "I'm an Episcopalian mysel'; but I hae lived lang eneuch to ken, and, indeed, I wasna very auld afore I thocht I saw that a body's religious profession was likely to be the same as his father's afore him; and so I just gie everybody the same liberty I tak' to mysel'. I hae Established Kirk, and Free Kirk, and Episcopal bairns, and they're a' alike to me. D'ye no think I'm richt?"

"Quite right, I have no doubt. The three bodies you mention have far more points of agreement than of difference, and there is enough of common ground to enable you to do your duty by them without offending the mind of the most sensitive parent. I wish your opinions were more common than they are."

During the conversation the old man worked while he talked. He had evidently acquired the habit of doing two things at once.

"I should like very much," I said, "to see some of your teaching. Will you let me hear how your pupils get on?"

"I'll do that wi' pleasure, sir," he replied;

"but ye maun excuse oor auld-fashioned tongue."

He took off his spectacles, and laid aside his work, I presume out of deference to a stranger; and was about to call up some of his scholars, when I requested him not to mind me, and said that I should prefer to see him go on in his ordinary way.

"Weel, weel, sir, ony way ye like; but I thocht it was barely dacent to gang on cobblin' awa' when ye were examinin' the bairns."

He accordingly resumed his spectacles and his work, adjusted his woollen nightcap or cowl, striped with red, white, and black—an article of common wear by day among people of his age and occupation—and, looking round, said, "Come here, Bell, and read to this gentleman."

This remark was addressed to a little girl about eight years of age. Bell came up when called.

"She has a dreadfu' memory, sir! I weel believe it wud tak' her an hour and a half to say a' she has by heart."

Bell read fluently and intelligently, spelt correctly, and afterwards repeated a whole chapter of Job with scarcely a stumble, and so as to convince me that she really had a "dreadfu' mem-

ory." Her answers to several questions proposed by myself were wonderfully mature. I have seldom seen a child whose solidity of intellect and thoughtfulness struck me more than that of Bell M'Kenzie.

"Come here noo, Jamie," he said, addressing a very little boy, "and if ye read weel, or at any rate *as weel's ye can do*, to this gentleman, ye'll get a sweetie; but if ye dinna, ye'll get naething."

What a world of kindliness and consideration there is in these five little words, "as weel's ye can do," even as they appear on paper! It was a *strict*, but not a *hard* bargain. I daresay the modification, "as weel's ye can do," was suggested by Jamie's very tender age: he was just over three. Less than "weel" would earn the sweetie; but it must be *as weel's he can do*. The test was, as it should always be in such cases, a relative one. In order, however, to apprehend the full effect of the modifying words, it is necessary to hear the tone of the old man's voice, to see the gentle pat on Jamie's back with which they were accompanied, and the childlike confidence with which the little urchin of three years came up to the old man of nearly eighty-two, and, resting his arm on the apron-covered knee, began to spell out his lesson, having first

assured himself by an inquiring look into the "maister's" face that the stranger meant him no harm. The awl was used as a pointer, and Jamie did at first pretty well—for his age, I thought, wonderfully well, but to the old shoemaker's mind, "no sae weel's he could do," and he had to give place to another boy. He did so, but the tears came into his little eyes, and remained there till he was taken on a second trial, and reinstated in favour. He earned and got his sweetie; that was a good thing. He had pleased the "maister," and was no longer in disgrace; that was evidently a far better thing.

The Bible class was then called up.

"That cratur' there, Jean," he said, putting his hand on a little girl's head, and looking kindly in her face, "is a gude scholar, though she's but sma'."

Jean, reassured by the remark, and prepared for the ordeal, gave a smile, and commenced reading the 26th chapter of Numbers. It was difficult, and even Jean halted now and then as a proper name of more than ordinary difficulty came in her way.

"I doot it's a hard bit that, Jean," he said; "is't a' names?"

"Na, nae't *a*'," she replied, with an emphasis

on the *a'*, which left it to be inferred that a good part of it was names.

"Weel, do the best ye can; spell them oot when ye canna read them. Come here, Jessie," he said, addressing the biggest girl present, probably eleven years of age, "and see if they spell them richt." Turning to me, he said, "I'm no sae fond o' chapters fu' o' names as o' them that teach us our duty to God and ane anither; but it does them nae harm to be brocht face to face wi' a difficulty noo and then. It wad tak' the speerit oot o' the best horse that ever was foaled to mak' it draw aye up-hill. But a chapter like that maks them try themsel's in puttin' letters thegither, and naming big words. I daur-say ye'll agree wi' me, that to battle wi' a difficulty and beat it is a gude thing for us a', if it doesna come ower often."

"I quite agree with you," I replied.

"Weel, when it's a namey chapter like that, I get my assistant" (with a humorous twinkle of his eye)—"that bit lassie's my assistant—to look ower't, and see if they spell't richt. I couldna be sure o' the spellin' o' the names withoot the book."

After the Bible lesson, and as a supplement to it, Jessie, the assistant, was ordered to ask the Shorter Catechism. She ranged pretty nearly

over it all, and received, on the whole, surprisingly correct answers. Meantime the old man went steadily on with his shoe, all eye for his work, all ear for blunders. Once he heard one girl whispering assistance to another, which he promptly and almost severely checked by, "Dinna tell her; there's nae waur plan than that. If she needs help, I'll tell her mysel', or bid you tell her."

A boy who stumbled indifferently through an answer was punished with "Ay, ye're no very clear upon that, lad. Try't again. I doot ye haena stressed your e'en wi' that ane last nicht." He tried it again, but with not much better success. "Oh, tak' care! ye're no thinkin'. If ye dinna think o' the meanin', hoo can ye be richt? Ye might as weel learn Gaelic."

After several other correct answers, I had a very good example of the quickness of perception which long experience gives. A little girl having broken down, opened the catechism which she held in her hand, and craftily began reading instead of repeating the answer. The shoemaker's ear at once caught it up. He detected from the accuracy of the answer, and at the same time from the hesitating tone in which it was given, the effort of reading, and said, in a voice of con-

siderable severity, "What! are ye keekin'? Hae ye your catechiss in your han'? Hoo often hae I telt ye o' the dishonesty o' that? Ye're cheatin', or at ony rate ye're tryin' to cheat me. Do I deserve that frae ye? Did I ever cheat you? But ye're doing far waur than cheatin' me. Oh, whatever ye do, be honest. Come to the schule wi' your lessons weel by heart if you can; but if you've been lazy, dinna mak' your faut waur by being dishonest."

It will be seen from this sketch of his teaching that Mr Beattie is a man of no ordinary type. I have succeeded very imperfectly in conveying an adequate notion of his kindliness and sympathy with everything good. I was surprised to find, in a man moving in a very narrow circle, such advanced and well-matured theories of education. His idea of the extent to which difficulties should be presented in the work of instruction—his plan of selecting passages instead of taking whatever comes to hand—his objection to whispering assistance, "Dinna tell her; if she needs help, I'll tell her mysel', or bid you tell her"—his severe but dignified reproof of dishonesty, "Ye're cheatin' me, but ye're doing far waur than that. Oh, whatever ye do, be honest!" &c.—his encouragement to thoughtfulness and intelligence, "If

ye dinna think o' the meanin', hoo can ye be richt?"—seemed to me most admirable, well worthy the attention of all who are engaged in similar pursuits, and certainly very remarkable as being the views of a man who has mixed little with the world, and gained almost nothing from the theories of others.

It was evident from the behaviour of the children that they all fear, respect, and love him.

I sat and talked with him on various subjects for a short time longer, and then rose to bid him good-bye.

"But, sir," he remarked, "this is a cauld day, and, if ye're no a teetotaller, ye'll maybe no object to gang up to my house wi' me and 'taste something'?"

I replied that I was not a teetotaller, and should be very glad to go with him. We went accordingly, "tasted something," and had a long talk.

He has, for a country shoemaker, a remarkably good library. The books generally are solid, some of them rare, and he seems to have made a good use of them. His opinion of novels is perhaps worth quoting—

"I never read a novel a' my days. I've heard bits o' Scott read that I likit very weel, but I

never read ony o' them mysel'. The bits I heard telt me some things that were worth kennin', and were amusin' into the bargain; but I understan' that's no the case wi' the maist o' novels. When a body begins to read them, he canna stop; and when he has dune, he kens nae mair than when he began. Noo it taks me a' my time to read what's really worth kennin'."

I asked him what had first made him think of teaching.

"Mony a time," he replied, "hae I asked that at mysel'; and its nae wonder, for I never was at the schule but eleven weeks in my life, and that was when I was a loon (laddie) about eleven years auld. I had far mair need to learn than to teach, though I'm no sure but to teach a thing is the best way to learn't. Amaist a' that I ken, and it's no muckle to be sure, I got it by learning ithers. But ye've asked what made me begin teachin'? Weel, sir, it was this: When I was a young lad, there were seven grown-up folk roun' aboot here that couldna read a word. Some o' them were married and had families, and there was nae schule nearer than twa mile, and in the winter especially the young things couldna gang sae far. Ane o' the fathers said to me ae day: 'Ye ken, Jamie, I canna read mysel',

but oh, man, I ken the want o't, and I canna thole that Willie shouldna learn. Jamie, ye maun tak' and teach him.' 'Oh, man,' I said, 'hoo can I teach him? I ken naething mysel'.' 'Ye maun try,' he said. Well, I took him, and after him anither and anither cam', and it wasna lang till I had aboot twenty. In a year or twa I had between sixty and seventy, and sae I hae keepit on for near sixty years. I soon grew used wi't, and custom, ye ken, is a kind o' second nature."

"But how did you find room," I asked "for sixty in that little place?"

"Weel, sir, there was room for mair than ye wud think. Wherever there was a place that a cratur' could sit, I got a stoolie made, and every corner was filled. Some were at my back, some were in the corner o' the window, and some were sittin' among the auld shoon at my feet. But for a' that there wasna room for sixty; and so a woman that lived across the road had a spare corner in her house, and when the bairns got their lessons they gaed owre and sat wi' her, and made room for the ithers. Ye see, the fathers and mithers were aye in gude neebourhood wi' me. They were pleased and I was pleased, and when folk work into ane anither's

han's, they put up wi' things that they wudna thole at ither times."

"You must have had great difficulty," I remarked, "in keeping so many of them in order. What kind of punishment did you use?"

"Oh, sir, just the strap. Ye might hae seen it lying amang the auld shoon."

"And did you need to use it often?"

"Ou ay, mony a time, when they were obstinate. But I maun say, it was when the schule was sae close packit that I had to use't maist. When they were sittin' just as close as I could pack them, some tricky nackits o' things wud put their feet below the seats, and kick them that was sittin' afore them. Order, ye ken, maun be keepit up, and I couldna pass by sic behaviour. I've seldom needit to chasteese them for their lessons," he continued; "the maist o' them are keen to learn, and gie me little trouble."

"Have you any idea," I asked, "of the number of pupils you have passed through your hands during these sixty years?"

"Weel, I keepit nae catalogue o' names, but some o' them that tak' an interest in the bairns made oot that they canna be less than fourteen or fifteen hunder. I weel believe they're richt."

"And you have never charged any fees, I understand?"

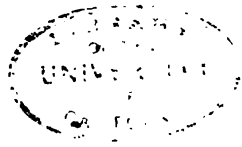
"Fees! Hoo could I charge fees? I never socht, and I never wanted a sixpence. But I maun say this, that the neebours hae been very kind, for they offered to work my bit croft for me, and it wudna hae been dacent to refuse their kindness. And they gied me a beautiful silver snuff-box in 1835. That's it," he said, taking it out of his pocket; "wull ye no tak' anither pinch?"

I did, and then said that I was glad to learn from his friend Mr C—— that, a year or so ago, he had been presented with his portrait and a handsome purse of money.

"Deed it's quite true, and I was fairly affronted when they gied me my portrait and £86, and laudit me in a' the papers. Some o't cam' frae Canada and ither foreign pairts; but I ken't naething aboot the siller till they gied it to me, for they cam' owre me, and got me to tell them, without thinking o't, where some o' my auld scholars were leevin'. I said to mysel' when I got it, that I was thankfu' for't, for I wud be able noo to buy the puir things books wi't."

"You supply them with books, then?" I inquired.

"Fees! Hoo could I charge fees?"



"Weel, them that's no able to buy them," he said, with a peculiar smile.

I have not succeeded in analysing this smile to my own satisfaction, but, among other things, it expressed commiseration for the poverty of those who were not able to buy books, and a deprecating reproof of himself for having been unwittingly betrayed into an apparent vaunting of his own good deeds.

"You must have great pleasure," I said, "in looking back to the last sixty years, and counting up how many of your old scholars have done you credit."

"Oh, I hae that!" he replied. "I've dune what I could, and there's nae better wark nor learnin' young things to read, and ken their duty to God and man. If it was to begin again, I dinna think I could do mair, or at ony rate mair earnestly, for education than I hae dune; but I could maybe do't better noo. But it's a dreadfu' heartbreak when ony o' them turns oot ill, after a' my puir wark to instil gude into them."

I led him by degrees to take a retrospect of the last half century. He told me, in his simple, unaffected Doric, the history of some of his pupils, keeping himself in the background, except where

his coming forward was necessary either to complete the story or put in a stronger light the good qualities of some of his old scholars. He paused now and then, sometimes with his hands on his knees and his head slightly lowered, sometimes with his head a little to one side and his eye looking back into the far-off years, and I saw, by his quiet, reflective look, that he was scanning the fruits of his labours, his expression varying from gaiety to gloom, as the career of a successful or "ne'er-do-weel" pupil passed in review before him.

I complimented him on his haleness for his years.

"Yes," he replied, "I should be thankfu', and I try to be't; but, I'm feared, no sae thankfu' as I should be. Except hearing and memory, I hae my faculties as weel's when I was ten year auld. Eh! what a mercy! hoo mony are laid helpless on their back lang afore they're my age, and hoo few are aboon the ground that are sae auld!"

Here the old man's voice faltered, and tears of genuine gratitude filled his eyes.

"Of a' them that began life wi' me, I just ken ane that's no ta'en awa'. There were twelve brithers and sisters o' us, and I'm the only ane that's left. My father dee't when I was sixteen.

My aulder brithers was a' oot at service; and as I was the only ane that was brocht up to my father's trade, my mither and the younger anes had to depend maistly on me; and I thocht I was a broken reed to depend on, for I hadna mair nor half-learned my trade when my father dee't. I mind the first pair o' shoon I made; when I hung them up on the pin, I said to mysel', 'Weel, the leather was worth mair afore I put a steek (stitch) in't.' Ye ken they werena sae particular then as they are noo. If the shoe didna hurt the foot, and could be worn at a', they werena very nice aboot the set o't. Mony a time I thocht I wud hae lost heart, but regard for my mither keepit me frae despairin'. Whiles I was for ownin' beat, and askin' the rest to help us; but my mither said, 'Na, Jamie, my man, we'll just work awa' as weel's we can, and no let the rest ken.' Weel, I wrocht hard at my trade, and when I should hae been sleepin', I wrocht at my books, and I made progress in baith. Ah, sir," said the old man, with a pathos I cannot reproduce, "naebody that hasna had to fecht for the best o' mithers can understan' my feelings when I saw at last that I was able to keep her and mysel' in meat and claes respectably. I've had mony a pleasure in my lang life, but this was worth them

a' put thegither. Ay," he said, and his voice became deeper and richer, "it's grand to win a battle when ye've been fechtin' for the through-bearin' and comfort o' an auld widow mither that ye like wi' a' your heart! For, oh! I likit my mither, and she deserved a' my likin'."

Here he broke down, his eyes filled, and, as if surprised at his own emotion, he brushed away the tears almost indignantly with his sleeve, saying, "I'm an auld man, and maybe I should think shame o' this, but I canna help being prood o' my mither."

"I think I can understand both your perseverance and your pride," I replied; "you must have had a hard struggle."

"Ay, I cam' through the hards; but if I was to be laid aside noo, it wud be nae loss to my family, for they're comfortable, and could keep me weel eneuch; and I'm sure they wud do't."

"You were well armed for the battle," I replied, "and it was half won before you began it; for you evidently commenced life with thoroughly good principles and strong filial affection."

"Yes, I've reason to be thankfu' for a gude upbringin'. Mony a callant is ruined by bad example at hame. I canna say that for mysel'. Whatever ill I hae dune in my life canna be laid

at my father or mither's door. No, no; they were a dacent, honest, God-fearin' couple, and everybody respeckit them."

"Their example seems not to have been lost upon you; for you, too, have the respect of every one who knows you."

"Weel, I dinna ken," he replied; "everybody has enemies, and I may hae mine, but I dinna ken them—I really dinna ken them."

"Have you always lived in this village?" I asked.

"Yes; and, what's curious, I've lived under four kings, four bishops, four ministers, and four proprietors. And for mair than sixty years I've gane to the chapel at least ance a-week, and that's a walk o' eight mile there and back. That's some travelling for ye. I never was an hour ill since I was fourteen year auld."

He still looks wonderfully hale; but he says that for some time past he has felt the weight of years coming upon him.

"Sometimes," he said, "I grow dizzy. I dinna ken what it is to be the waur o' drink, but I think it maun be something like what I've felt —just sae dizzy that if I was to cross the floor and tramp on a bool [marble] I would fa'."

Judging, however, from his haleness, one

would think him not much above seventy, and even strong for that, and with probably years of good work in him yet. He expresses himself clearly, methodically, and without an atom of pedantry, though in the broadest Scotch. He is, as I have said, an Episcopalian, and says, "When it is a saint's day, and the bairns are telt no to come to the schule, for I maun gang to the chapel, if I have occasion to gang doon to the shop a wee in the morning afore chapel-time to finish some bit job, I catch mysel' lookin' roun' for the bairns, though there's nane o' them there. Na," he continued, "I couldna do without my bairns noo at a': I canna maybe do them muckle gude, but I can do them nae harm; and as lang as I can try to do them gude, I'll no gie't up."

Thus ended my first morning with James Beattie, in February 1864, and I felt as if I had been breathing an atmosphere as fresh, bracing, and free from taint as that which plays on mid-ocean or on the top of Ben Nevis.

I saw him a second time in January 1865, and, though it was again a snowy day, I found twenty pupils present. The shoemaking and schoolwork go on as before. The awl and the hammer are

as busy as ever, and his care of his bairns unabated. I had scarcely sat down before I asked for "Bell," whose "dreadfu' memory" had surprised me the previous year. I saw, from the grieved expression that passed over his countenance, that something was wrong.

"Eh! man, Bell's deid. She dee't o' scarlatina on the last day o' September, after eighteen hours' illness. There never was a frem'd body's[1] death that gied me sae muckle trouble as puir Bell's."

Evidently much affected by the loss of his favourite pupil, he went on to say, "She was insensible within an hour after she was ta'en ill, and continued that way till a short time afore she was ta'en awa', when she began to say a prayer—it was the langest ane I had learned her—and she said it frae beginning to end withoot a mistak'. Her mither, puir body, thocht she had gotten the turn, and was growing better, but whenever the prayer was dune, she grew insensible again, and dee't aboot an hour after. Wasna that most extraordinar'? It behoved to be the Speerit o' God workin' in that bairn afore He took her to Himsel'. Ay, it'll be lang afore I forget Bell. I think I likit her amaist as if she had been my ain.

[1] A person not a relation.

Mony a time I said she was owre clever to leeve lang, but her death was a sair grief to me nane the less o' that. I'll never hae the like o' her again. I've a sister o' hers here. Annie M'Kenzie," he said, addressing a little girl, "stan' up, and let this gentleman see ye." Turning again to me, he said, "She has a wonderfu' memory too, but no sae gude as Bell's. She's just aboot six year auld. She has a prayer where she prays for her father and mither, and brithers and sister. Puir Bell was the only sister she had, and I said to her ae day that she shouldna say 'sister' ony mair in her prayer; and, wud ye believe't, sir? the tears cam' rinnin' doon the cratur's cheeks in a moment. I couldna help keepin' her company. Ye wudna expect that frae ane o' her age. She has a brither, too, aboot three year auld, that will come to something. He has a forehead stickin' oot just as if your han' was laid on't."

Jamie had made good progress during the year, and earned another sweetie easily. He has been promoted to the dignity of pointing for himself, and no longer requires the awl.

Mr Beattie seems as vigorous as when I saw him a year ago. The only indication of greater feebleness is, that he has taken regularly to the use of a staff. He walks, however, nimbly and

well; but he says the dizziness comes over him now and then, and he feels more at ease when he has a staff in his hand.

He asked me if I could not come and see him next day. I said I was sorry I could not. "I am awfu' vexed at that," he said; "this is the last day o' my eighty-first year. The morn's my eighty-second birthday, and I thocht I micht maybe never see anither, and I made up my mind to gie the bairns a treat. They're a' comin', and they get a holiday. I'm awfu' vexed ye canna come."

"I wish very much I could," I replied.

"A' the neebours," he said, "are takin' an interest in't, and the Colonel's lady has sent me a cake to divide among the bairns—that's a sma' thing compared wi' a' her gude deeds, for she's a by-ordnar fine woman. Ye maun come up to my house and get a bit o' the cake."

I objected that it was scarcely fair to break it before to-morrow.

"Ou ay, ye maun taste it. She'll no object to you gettin' a bit o't afore the bairns."

I yielded of course, and spent another pleasant hour with him, during which I had my first impression confirmed as to his single-hearted benevolence and altogether fine character. I

shook hands with him, and as I was leaving said that I had some intention of sending a short sketch of his labours to 'Good Words.' I asked if he had any objection to his name being mentioned.

"Weel, sir," he said, "I'm real gratefu' for your kindness in coming twice to see me, and takin' notice o' me the way ye've dune. It's far mair than I deserve. I dinna think the readers o' 'Good Words' will care muckle aboot the like o' me, and I've never been fond o' makin' a show; but if ye think an article wi' my name in't wud encourage ithers in my humble way to do a' they can for the upbringin' o' puir creaturs that hae nae ither way o' gettin' education, I'll no forbid ye to do just as ye like."

"Well, then, I'll do it. Good-bye!"

"Wull ye gie me anither shake o' your han' afore ye go? I may never see ye again."

"Most willingly," I replied.

He took my hand in one of his, and, laying his other on my shoulder, said, "I'm no a man o' mony words, but I wud like ye to believe that I'm gratefu', real gratefu', for your kindness—as gratefu' as an auld man that kens weel what kindness is can be; and I wud like ye to promise, if ye're hereaboots next year, and me spared till

that time, that ye'll no gang by my door. Wull ye promise this?"

I gave the promise, and was rewarded by two or three kindly claps on the back, a hearty squeeze of the hand, and "God bless ye, and keep ye!"

The moral of James Beattie's life requires no pointing. A life that has been a discipline of goodness, and to which benevolence has become a necessity—"I canna do without my bairns noo at a', and as lang's I can try to do them gude, I'll no gie't up"—has a simple eloquence that needs no aid, and admits of no embellishment from well-balanced phrases.

James Beattie was a man who had been diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord!

CHAPTER XI.

SHERIFF NICOLSON — J. F. MACLENNAN — D'ARCY THOMPSON — SWEARING IN LATIN — A READING PARTY — ALEXANDER SMITH — 'PUNCH' TO THE RESCUE — P. P. ALEXANDER.

WHILE living in Edinburgh I saw a great deal of Alexander (afterwards Sheriff) Nicolson, who was my colleague as examiner in philosophy for degrees in Edinburgh; of John F. Maclennan, advocate, cut off when little past his prime; of the late D'Arcy Thompson, Professor of Greek in Galway; of Alexander Smith, poet and novelist, who also died early; and P. P. Alexander, a man of fine literary faculty, but sadly wanting in continuous effort. How exhilarating were the evenings spent with these men. What an alternative they were to dutiful but monotonous writing of school reports; how brilliant their conversation, how happy their repartees, how genial their intercourse!

Nicolson the Celt—a name by which he was

universally known among his friends—a man of brilliant ability, literary taste, sympathetic nature, keen sense of humour, and very considerable capacity for philosophical research, passed through life amid crowds of cultured friends, but from want of steady continuous energy fell far short of the future which his friends predicted for him. He was the most delightful of companions, composed and sang songs which will be long remembered, but from his easy-going temperament he was surpassed, not in popularity, but in solid success, by many who were in intellect much his inferiors.

Maclennan was as industrious as he was able. He wrote a great deal for the 'Leader,' contributed to the 'Encyclopædia Britannica' the article on "Law"; was parliamentary draughtsman for Scotland, and in his treatises on 'Primitive Marriage' and 'Totemism' showed great research and independent thought. Failing health prevented him from rewriting 'Primitive Marriage.' While his theories on this subject have not met with general acceptance, the acuteness and ingenuity with which he supported them are universally acknowledged. It is certain that he gave a great impulse to such prehistoric research. As a companion his con-

versation was exceedingly stimulative and invigorating.

D'Arcy Thompson was then writing his 'Day Dreams of a Schoolmaster,' and read over to me part of the chapter "Back to Babel," in which he discussed the meaning and nomenclature of Latin cases. The original MS. ended somewhat thus: "You are tired, Reader, by this time. I can hear you indistinctly muttering, 'Confound these cases, do let them alone.' No, gentle Reader, they are already confounded, and I could heartily wish they were damned." I made a strong protest against this being printed, urging that it would be injurious to him as a teacher, and that Edinburgh parents would not tolerate *sweerin' at lairge* by an Academy Master. He at first obstinately refused to change it, but on the application of stronger pressure I convinced him of the inexpediency of arousing parental wrath, and he consented to a compromise. The paragraph now stands thus: "No, Reader, me judice illa antiqua vocabula non CONFUNDENDA sunt, quippe quæ jam satis confusa sint; sed prorsus et in æternum DAMNANDA." I think my advice was good. It is much safer to swear in Latin than in English.

I have a most pleasant recollection of a de-

lightful couple of months which I spent with him on the shores of Loch Long, as one of a small reading-party, to whom he acted as guide, philosopher, and friend, immediately before I entered Cambridge as an undergraduate. The weather was all that could be wished, and the party well assorted in respect of temper, tastes, and the extent to which our time should be apportioned between work and play. We read from two to three hours in the forenoon, and after lunch repaired to a comfortable shady spot close by, Homer in hand, to listen with delight for an hour or more to D'Arcy's translation of selected books into Anglo-Saxon speech, so well suited to the subject, of which he had such an admirable command. Then a couple of hours' fishing, generally successful, in the loch, followed by dinner and whist or light reading, finished the day. This reminiscence has a very sweet savour.

With Alexander Smith I was very intimate. He was a man singularly gentle, undemonstrative, and unassuming, with a large share of quiet humour, with not a particle of gall in his nature, patient of criticism, not in the least elated when it was favourable or even rapturous (as it was when the 'Life-drama,' his first great literary effort, appeared), and unruffled when it was ob-

viously unfair and born of bitter animus. Few men have been so much lionised as he was on its first appearance, but there was no affectation in the equanimity with which he listened to adulation in some respects overdone, yet perfectly intelligible from the unquestionably high level of many passages comparable with the best poetry of the nineteenth century. No one was more conscious than himself, or more frankly admitted, that much of the writing was young, that his imagination sometimes ran riot, that passion and sentiment were at times pitched on too high a key. This was no doubt the case, but as Jeffrey said of Keats, the spirit of poetry breathes through all the extravagance. The 'Life-drama' is wanting in constructive power, but it contains many beautiful passages, pearls exquisite in themselves, but arranged so artlessly and at random as to fall short of sustained effect. Many will remember the keen controversy that arose from reviews of the 'Life-drama' and 'City Poems' in the 'Athenæum,' in which Mr Smith was charged with gross plagiarism. It is perhaps difficult to deny that there was apparent ground for some of the charges, but it was contended—and reasonably contended — that a friendly or fair critic could have accounted for them as the outcome

of the tenacious memory of a man who, having read widely and with passionate admiration the works of many poets, had honestly employed (as his own) expressions and ideas which had been unconsciously assimilated. Other charges, however, and of these the majority, had a basis so ludicrously slender, and were prompted by an unfairness so obvious, that even 'Punch' came to the rescue. In a similar case lately the editor of the same periodical felt it to be a duty to administer a most scathing and well-deserved castigation to Henley for his mean and heartless depreciation of the merits of his dead friend Robert Louis Stevenson. None but very flagrant instances of hitting below the belt would tempt 'Punch' to deal with topics so alien to its appropriate *métier*.

The squib in which the ill-natured charges of plagiarism had keen and effective ridicule heaped upon them was ascribed to Shirley Brooks. It is now such an old story that it is probably forgotten by all but Smith's intimate friends, but it is perhaps worthy of repetition. I quote from memory, but remember enough of it to give a fairly correct notion of its general scope:—

"We find in Mr Smith the line—

'The bees are busy in the yellow hive,'

"Obviously taken," says 'Punch,' "from that well-known poem, 'How doth the little busy bee,' &c.

"Again, Mr Smith writes—

'Each star that twinkles in the sky,'

which is again borrowed from

'Twinkle, twinkle, little star.'

"Again Mr Smith—

'And these be my last words,'

plagiarised from—

'Were the last words of Marmion.'

"Again Mr Smith—

'And islands in the lustrous Grecian seas,'

an obvious borrow from Byron's

'The isles of Greece.'

"Again Mr Smith—

'A sigh and curse together,'

clearly taken from Scott, where the dying kid by its mother's side is said

'To draw its last sob by the side of its dam.'"

The article ends with a statement to the effect that it may safely be said that there is not a

word in Mr Smith's poetry that has not been previously used by some other poet.

One may imagine the appreciative laughter with which we joined Smith in seeing the *reductio ad absurdum* argument pressed home so effectually.

P. P. Alexander was, I have said, a man of great ability, but had somehow lost his way in life. He would have made an excellent soldier, and, had the choice been allowed him, would have adopted a military career. Balked in this, it is said, by his father's opposition, he did not take kindly to a commercial life, and ultimately gave it up. Having a moderate patrimony, he could afford to be intermittently industrious in literary effort, while, partly from natural temperament and partly from disappointment as to his life pursuit, he was persistently Bohemian. Evidence of this latter characteristic crops up frequently in his writings, and notably in his admirable Memoir of Smith. In all he wrote — humorous, philosophical, or pathetic — one cannot help feeling that his capacity was much greater than his performance, and regretting that he did not by continuous steady effort do, what he evidently could have done, earn for himself high distinction in literature. He had a wide acquaintance with the literary circles of

Edinburgh — Bohemian and other — and spent many evenings with friends among whom there was, as he says, "Much hearty, careless talk, frequently of a dreadfully unintellectual character." In the Saturday evening club of which I was for many years a member and which came to an end five or six years ago, killed by the steadily increasing lateness of Edinburgh dinner-hours, Mr Alexander was occasionlly present. It was purely a conversational club. At its inception, and for many years afterwards, it was the weekly meeting-place of university professors, doctors, lawyers, artists, and others of distinctly intellectual type. Informal discussions, sometimes on scientific, sometimes on literary, sometimes on social subjects, were carried on with much spirit and enjoyment. The creature comforts were pipes and moderate indulgence in the wine of the country.

One night the change in the drinking habits of people was incidentally referred to. Doubts were expressed about the authenticity of twelve and twenty tumblers of toddy being drunk at one sederunt. I professed no knowledge, personal or other, of such feats; but I said that a farmer in Aberdeenshire, of the highest respectability and *wecht*, whom I knew intimately—a man often appointed

as arbiter in cases requiring sound judgment and accuracy of statement, and in whose veracity on ordinary subjects I had absolute confidence—assured me that he had been one of twelve farmers who had sat down to dinner at three o'clock in the afternoon, and at three o'clock in the morning every man had drunk twenty-four tumblers of toddy. Mr Alexander was present, and was evidently interested in my statement. Turning to me he said, "My dear Kerr, I have no doubt that you have correctly reported what your farmer friend told you, but I venture to say, on the strength of personal and very considerable experience in drinking whisky, that the story is not credible. The man who has taken twenty-four tumblers is not fit to give evidence."

I need not say that I found effective reply impossible, and that we all admired the quickness and logic with which he knocked the bottom out of a story so circumstantially told.

That he had sad as well as festive hours, and could give them finely poetical expression, is seen in the following lines:—

"Death! I have heard thee in the summer noon
Mix thy weird whisper with the breath of flowers:
And I have heard thee oft in jocund hours,
Speak in the festal tones of music boon—

Not seldom thou art with me late and soon,
  Whether the waves of life are dancing bright,
  Or, dead to joy of thought, and sound, and sight,
My world lies all distraught and out of tune.

But most—in lone, drear hours of undelight,
  When Sleep consents not to be child of choice,
And shuddering at its own dread stillness, Night,
  Hung like a pall of choky dampness round,
  Makes Silence' self to counterfeit a sound—
Methinks it is thine own authentic voice."

CHAPTER XII.

CHANGES IN GRADUATION AND BURSARIES IN EDINBURGH AND GLASGOW—ABERDEEN, WHY DIFFERENT—DICK BEQUEST—GRADUATION AND BURSARIES FIFTY YEARS AGO AND NOW—UNIVERSITY NO PLACE FOR POVERTY OF BOTH PURSE AND INTELLECT—BURSARIES, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, SHOULD BE OPEN TO FREE COMPETITION — CROOKED ANSWERS FROM EXAMINATION PAPERS.

In two very important respects there have been great changes in the southern universities of Scotland within the last forty years—the proportion of students who place the copestone on their studies in the Faculty of Arts by graduating, and the number of bursaries open to free competition. In Aberdeen it has always been the fashion to graduate, and not to do so almost a disgrace. In the southern universities the fashion was non-graduation. For this there were several reasons, the chief of which may be shortly stated. In Aberdeen graduation was encouraged by the Dick Bequest, which has done more for the promotion of advanced education than any fund with which I am acquainted.

From it every parish schoolmaster in the counties of Aberdeen, Banff, and Moray might receive, as an addition to his income, sums ranging from £25 to £50 per annum. The first condition of such payments was passing a severe examination in university subjects by the Dick Trustees. Practically these schools were open only to graduates, or men of graduate stamp. A man below graduate stamp could neither pass the examination nor bring his Latin pupils up to the mark of a good place in the bursary competition. In this competition there was another encouragement to graduation. The Aberdeen town council and other patrons of bursaries, instead of gratifying a petty love of patronage which delights in dispensing favours to the importunate, often altogether irrespective of merit, consented to be entirely guided by the competition list, except where special conditions had been laid down by the testators. Every year between forty and fifty bursaries of the value of £35 downwards—the majority of them open to general competition—were offered, and for these it is approximately true that *all students competed.* The test was creditably high, and the majority consequently came up from school well prepared. A satisfactory place in the competition was a good

guarantee for the present possession or future acquisition of attainments which naturally and easily issued in graduation.

In comparing Aberdeen with Edinburgh and Glasgow it must be borne in mind that in the two latter, as being large cities, there is a considerable proportion of casual students—that is, students who attend the university simply as in some sort a supplement to secondary education, and who have neither intention nor strong motive to graduate. They do not care for, because they do not require, a degree for success in life. These set the fashion of non-graduation. This was the case fifty years ago. Since then there has been an enormous and gratifying change. In Glasgow University in 1850 only 19 students took the degree of M.A.; in 1900, 123 did so. There is a similar increase of graduates in the Faculties of Divinity, Medicine, and Law. In Arts the increase is nearly seven times, and in the other faculties taken together upwards of five times, what it was fifty years ago. The larger number of students only very partially accounts for this. The number in 1850 was about 900, and now it is 2033, of whom 341 are women.

In Edinburgh University much the same is the case. In 1859 the number of graduates in Arts

was 16. In 1901 the number is 126. In 1858 the number of matriculated students in all the Faculties of Arts, Divinity, Law, and Medicine was 1426. In 1901 the number is 2929.

Still greater and more gratifying is the revolution that has taken place in the bursary system of Glasgow during the last fifty years. Principal Caird, in an opening address many years ago, said, "I regret much that the educational advantages which accrue to the University of Aberdeen from their initial bursary competitions we do not possess, and I should venture to call the attention of intending benefactors of this university to the circumstances, and to point out to them that there is no way in which they can so much promote the welfare of the university, or further the great ends for which it exists, as to largely increase the number of our competitive bursaries —of bursaries not clogged by any special conditions, but open to general competition." At that time the Snell exhibitions to Oxford, and the Breadalbane scholarships, were judiciously bestowed, after examination, on the best men, but the bursaries were scrambled for by students whose strongest claim was often simply greed or need. Greed has of course no claim: need alone—that is, poverty of both purse and intellect—has as little.

The university is no place for a man whose skull and purse are both badly lined. The bestowal of bursaries did not incite to intellectual effort, but to importunity of favours from town councils and private patrons, and had little or no effect in quickening the pulse of university life, or producing any of the fruits for which alone universities can fairly claim a right to exist, or promoting what is the true source of university success—a sound and efficient school training. Too many patrons failed to see that it is not the sole, nor even the chief, function of a bursary to supply a poor student with so much bread and butter, and that the virtue that lies in it is revealed only when it calls forth efforts hearty enough to deserve the bread and butter. Its function is not to support at college a probably lumpish lad who would make a good ploughman or artisan, but a very poor minister, lawyer, or doctor, and whose fitness as a recipient of the bounty rests on no higher ground than that he is acquainted with the influential members of a certain kirk-session or presbytery, or has a father who vigorously importunes a corporation, a town council, or a duke. There is room in the world for workers of all kinds, and the work for one who is poor both in purse and brains is with

his hands. No amount of bolstering up with presentation bursaries will profitably or permanently make him a successful man.

The appeal of Principal Caird and others has met with a very satisfactory response, in respect of both number of bursaries and conditions of tenure. The conditions vary considerably, but the bursaries may, with tolerable accuracy, be divided into three classes—(1) those awarded by patronage; (2) those awarded by competition with restriction to certain names, localities, or schools; (3) those open to unrestricted competition. In 1850 there were in all 65 bursaries, 38 of which were in the Faculty of Arts, 25 in Divinity, and 2 in Medicine; only 3 of these were open to competition. In 1900 there are 441 bursaries, of which 287 are in the Faculty of Arts, and the other 154 are in the Faculties of Divinity, Law, Science, &c. One-fourth are awarded by patronage, one-fourth are open to free competition, and one-half are open to competition with restrictions as to names, localities, &c. The annual value of the patronage group is £2759, of the open group £2754, and of the restricted group £5819. It is matter for regret that the last group should, in comparison with the other two groups, bulk so largely in number

and value. In a number of cases the preference is given only and strictly *cæteris paribus*. If it were competent to make this the rule in all cases, there can be no doubt that more good would be done. In the great majority of cases, however, the conditions of election are sufficient to ensure that the successful candidates, though perhaps not the best, have passed a good examination.

I took a keen and active interest in the question of competition *versus* presentation bursaries, and in an address in 1871 at a meeting of the General Council of Glasgow University, which the committee were good enough to issue in the form of a pamphlet, I was able to show from the statistics of Aberdeen University how fruitful the competition, and how comparatively barren the presentation, bursaries were; that in an important sense an open bursary competition was the backbone of the university; that by means of it secondary schools were healthily stimulated; that graduation was encouraged, and that, while only two-thirds of the bursary funds were open to competition, nearly nine-tenths of the university honours were gained by competition bursars. The annual value of fellowships, scholarships, and

bursaries is £14,450; but this does not include the Snell exhibitions, nor some other foundations, such as the Ferguson Scholarships, open but not confined to Glasgow University.

In Edinburgh in 1859 there were 70 bursaries in Arts; in 1901 there are 236. The majority of these come under the head of patronage. It is impossible to distinguish accurately between those awarded by competition and those awarded by patronage, but a considerable number of those that appear under the head of patronage are gained by practically open competition. To this class belong the Heriot, Sibbald, and Town Council bursaries. The annual value of fellowships, scholarships, bursaries, and prizes is about £18,920.

The result of this increased number and opening up of bursaries to free competition has been an infusion of spirit and healthy emulation into university life. But even so it is impossible to exclude ludicrous blunders from the written exercises of the most immaculate institution known to man. Such blunders, fortunately, are not typical, but *rari nantes in gurgite vasto.* As in morals so in examination papers,

> "The evil that men do lives after them,
> The good is oft interred with their bones."

The sustained excellence of a translation or composition is not a quotable article like a full-blooded blunder. The fate of superior productions is to be noted and "interred" among the examiner's papers. I have a good many such relics of degree examinations—the work of John (now Dr) Marshall of Edinburgh High School, T. S. Omond, James Colville, and others, which make a most satisfactory counterpoise to the blunders of weaker men. With this explanation I do not fear to lower the character of our universities by the following examples, which may lighten an otherwise somewhat heavy chapter.

While I was examiner for degrees in Edinburgh and Glasgow universities a great many noteworthy cases of ludicrous answers came under my notice, a few specimens of which I venture to give. A candidate for the medical preliminary examination translated, "Nilus crocodilum alit belluam quadrupedem," "No crocodile carries on war with quadrupeds." Lest I should be charged with not "ploughing with my own heifer," I think it right to mention that a friend asked my permission to give this example in a paper on secondary education which he wrote for 'Fraser's Magazine' several years ago.

For the same examination the following sentence was set: "Quo prodigio territis omnibus cecinere vates, oriens Romanorum imperium, vetus Græcorum ac Macedonum voraturum."

One candidate, evidently desirous that I should not think that he was translating at random, gave, so to speak, chapter and verse for his work in the following way:—

"Quo (which) omnibus (all) prodigio territis (with great fear) cecinere vates (the prophets began to sing), oriens (praying for) imperium Romanorum (the power of the Romans), vetus Græcorum (the clothes of the Greeks) ac Macedonum voraturum (and the —— of the Macedonians)." Obviously, on the analogy on which the boy's mind was working, he should have crowned his work by writing "the appetite" of the Macedonians.

Another version was the following:—

"Quo (by which) vates cecinere omnibus territis (the prophets deceived the whole earth), imperium oriens Romanorum (the commanding voice of the Romans), vetus Græcorum (the vice of the Greeks) ac Macedonum voraturum (and the fury of the Macedonians)."

These seem excellent illustrations of the fact that a little learning is a dangerous thing. The

students knew just enough of Latin to lead them astray.

In an excellent secondary school which I examined two or three years ago, I set a passage from Cicero's letters, in which he reproaches his friend for not coming to live with him, and urges that at any rate he should pay him a visit every year, in the following terms: "Sed feram ut potero, sit modo annuum." This was translated, "But I shall tell you as well as I can, though it be after the manner of old women."

I set also the following passage: "Tanta vis avaritiæ in animos eorum veluti tabes invaserat," and got for the translation, "So great a greed had entered their spirits, just like cats." The *tabes* furnished such an obvious suggestion of *tabby* as could not be withstood.

I got three versions of Virgil, Æn. ix. 181:—

"Ora puer prima signans intonsa juventa."

(1) "The boy signing with youthful lips helping the shout."
(2) "A boy first blowing with his mouth the curved bull's horn."
(3) "The prayer while the boy was singing was first intoned in his youth."

For complexity and variety of blundering I think I may fairly claim that these three hold the field. They have also this specialty, that

while they are neither more nor less nonsensical than scores of other "howlers," we can trace up to its source the false light that

"Leads to bewilder and dazzles to blind,"

for every single word except *curved*, which is a leap into the absolutely dark. For the rest it is possible to plead the existence of a faint but misleading glimmer of daylight.

Again, Virgil, Æn. vii. 382:—

"Impubesque manus, mirata volubile buxum,'

where the youthful band instead of "admiring the whirling top," as they ought to have done, are represented as "admiring the talkative landlady." The evolution of *talkative* from *volubile* is easy. The conversion of *buxum* into a *landlady* is harder, but probably due to the supposition that a youthful band would naturally regard *buxom* as a usual and fitting characteristic of *mine hostess*.

Another:—

"Nemo est fortior leone, tamen leonem vir occidere potest"; "Nobody is stronger than a lion, but a man can kill a *tame* lion."

Another:—

"Ampliavit urbem, adjecto Cœlio monte"; "He filled the city, having thrown down the mountain of Cœlium."

Another, Virgil, Æn. iv. 245:—

"Illâ fretus agit ventos, et turbida tranat
Nubila. Jamque volans apicem et latera ardua cernit
Atlantis duri, cœlum qui vertice fulcit."

"She crosses the straits like the wind and gives up a disagreeable husband. And now wishing she sees a bee and the length and breadth of the stern Atlantic, which touches the sky at a vertex."

"Enthusiasm," according to one, was derived from ὁ θεὸς ἐν ἡμῖν; and according to another from a Latin term *thyas*, a female bacchanal who rushed madly about shouting, "Evoe! Bacche!"

These instances of "howlers" are of comparatively recent date. I find in my note-book others considerably older. While I have an impression that I found the two following in the revision of examination papers, it is possible that they may have been noted down as the experience of others:—

"Est medici sitim restinguere et sedare," "A doctor's duty is to quench his thirst and sit down and rest himself."

"Ultro pollicitus est quod antea negaverat," "He promised to the uncle what he had refused to the aunt."

To candidates for degree I prescribed a number

of words and phrases for derivation and explanation. One was "sepulchre," with which many were correct, a few wrong, but only one amusing.

"Sepulchre — derived from *se*, negative, and *pulcher*, fair, the place where beauty fades"; a very ingenious conjecture, creditably reasoned out, and for which we might have been thankful if we had not *sepelio* to fall back upon. I could not in my heart refuse to give him a few marks. Another was "catechism," which gave occasion for many wild guesses, all of which were wrong. The simplest was "from κατέχω, to restrain, a questioning calculated to restrain from falling into sin." Another and more elaborate one was, "a compendium in which the facts of any particular set of truths are broken up, as it were, and presented in a definite form. This meaning is easily traceable to the two Greek words from which it is derived, κατά, down, and χίζω, to separate or break."

Many other attempts were made, all wrong, as I more than half expected, but the most amusing was the following:—

"Catechism — derived from κατά, down, and χάσμα, a gap, a set of questions arranged to keep people from stumbling into the bottomless

pit." This was completed by a sort of Euclidian *Q.E.D.*—"in short, a catechism." The author of this answer became a respected and most orthodox minister. An intending medical student translated a line from Virgil—

"Jacet ingens littore truncus,"

"His huge body was laid upon a stretcher."

These two examples show how translation is apt to take form and colour from one's professional aims. The aspirant for holy orders found in "catechism" a reference to the bottomless pit, and the medical student in "littore" a reference to the litter of ambulance work. "Prevaricate" was derived from *præ* and *varicosus*, full of veins.

Candidates for the preliminary medical examination are responsible for a large number of queer answers.

A "papal bull" was said to be "an image blessed by the Pope and worshipped by Roman Catholics."

The "equator"—a line passing through the centre of the earth, where the sun is hottest.

A "cabal" was variously a kind of cabinet, or a rope generally belonging to a ship for mooring it.

The "Romance languages" were, according to one, the languages in which novelists write, and according to another, the languages spoken in the time of Romulus.

A "journeyman" was a person who travels with goods.

"Christian Fathers" were pious heads of families.

"A coign of vantage" was a lucky penny.

The "Pole-star," a star fixed on to the heavens at the north pole, on which the earth seems to spin round.

"Paradox" — some ridiculous writing like another writing.

"Apocryphal" — that which is hidden from man's comprehension.

CHAPTER XIII.

ORKNEY — KIRKWALL CATHEDRAL — "PICTS' HOUSES" AND STANDING-STONES—RENTS SIXTY YEARS AGO, "I SUD PAY A HEN" — "THE HAITHENS ATE TAM" — "I THOCHT I WAS NEEDIN' A SNUFF" — NORTH RONALDSAY — SHAPINSAY— COLONEL BALFOUR—MAESHOWE AND THE ANTIQUARIES— PROFESSOR AYTOUN—COLOGNE CATHEDRAL.

FOR the first sixteen years of my official life, from 1869 to 1875, Orkney and Shetland formed part of the district under my charge. My last visit was in 1879. Since then more frequent communication, with an excellent service of steamers, has no doubt wrought many changes, and made these outlying islands much better known; but forty years ago they were so little known that many persons, in other respects well informed, thought of them as in some sort the refuse of creation—some of the rubbish for which no use could be found, and which had been tossed out into the great lumber-room of the ocean to be out of the way; inhabited by a race with whom the civilised world had no commun-

ion, living on fish, dressing in sealskin, gloriously ignorant of broadcloth, destitute of education, coming into the world and leaving it without benefit of clergy. Many thought they spoke Gaelic—not that that is any fault, only it is not the case. They are and have always been as ignorant of Gaelic as we are of Chinese. The general appearance of the Orkney group is flat, but there are some bold headlands over 1000 feet in height. No trees meet the eye except in some sheltered spots under the protecting care of large buildings. So long as young plantations are protected from the sea-breezes they grow well enough, but as soon as they show their heads above the sheltering wall they become stunted. Pomona or Mainland is by far the largest of the group, with a length of thirty, and a breadth of about eight, miles.

The two largest towns are Kirkwall, the capital, and Stromness, with a population of 4000 and 1700 respectively. It is surprising to find that seven hundred years ago, on this extreme verge of civilisation, there arose a cathedral in Kirkwall, more perfect, very little smaller, and in some respects finer, than that of Glasgow. The architecture is Romanesque, with a little of the Early Pointed style. It is in good repair, and a

portion of it has been partitioned off and is used as a parish church. This part has been thoroughly spoiled by pews, ugly square windows, and unsightly galleries, as ill suited to the beautiful nave of the old cathedral as knickerbockers or a dress coat would be to a monk.

Within an easy walk from Kirkwall is Wideford Hill, from the top of which nearly all the islands may be seen; and no one who goes there on a clear day will hesitate to admit that the scene before him, looking seaward, is one of exquisite beauty. In calm weather the sea, landlocked by the islands, resembles a vast lake, clear and bright as a mirror, and without a ripple save from the gentle impulse of the tide. Here a bluff headland stands out in bold relief against the horizon, there the more distant islet is almost lost in sea and sky; on one side a shelving rock sends out a black tongue-like point, sharp as a needle, losing itself in the water where it forms one of those reefs so fatal to strangers, but which every Orkney boatman knows as we do the streets of our native town.

From this hill you can cast your eye on structures that are memorials of every form of religion that has ever existed in Scotland. Stennis and its standing-stones are in sight eight or ten miles

off. Nearer to you are some of those inscrutable mounds called Picts' houses, which are found in great numbers all over the islands. On the Isle of Eaglesay stand the walls of probably the earliest Christian church in Britain, with its peculiar cylindrical tower, of which there are only other two in Britain,—at Brechin and Abernethy,—and close beside you the cathedral and the churches of every considerable denomination in Scotland. The standing-stones of Stennis are still about thirty in number, forming portions of two incomplete circles, the larger being about a hundred yards in diameter, and the smaller upwards of thirty. The stones vary in form and size. The largest is about fourteen feet high, but the average height is from eight to ten. They are grand, solemn-looking old veterans, painfully silent regarding their past, as if ashamed to speak of the bloody rites in which they may have had a share. They were formerly called Druidical circles, perhaps for no better reason than that their history is utterly unknown. Of the mounds called Picts' houses we know as little. They are of two kinds, very similar in construction. The smaller seem to have been the dwellings of the early inhabitants of the country, and the others the sepulchres of their dead.

Within the last sixty years great progress has been made in agriculture, but the thriftlessness of the farming in the first half of the nineteenth century is well illustrated by an anecdote I had from the proprietor of Shapinsay. His father, observing that one of his tenants was always in difficulties, though he did not pay a farthing of rent, said to him that he was surprised at his being so much in want, seeing that he had a good croft and paid nothing for it. "Oh, Captain Balfour," he replied, "I dae pay a rent." "Why, what rent do you pay?" "Weel, I sud pay a hen." He thus took shelter under the fact that a hen was exigible, but he did not venture to say it was paid.

Another tenant, whose rent of 10s. had been in successive years reduced to 7s. 6d., 5s., and 2s. 6d., was at length for importunity's sake allowed to sit free. After a year or two he again presented himself on the rent day to the laird, who, at a loss to know what more he could want, said, "Well, Robert, do you wish a further reduction of rent?" "Oh, Captain," he replied, "ye're jokin' me noo; but I just cam to say that if ye dinna big me a barn I maun flit."

An Orkney laird showed great dexterity in dealing with a tenant whom he knew to be fairly

comfortable in respect of means. On the tenant asking for a loan the laird at once consented, and gave him a cheque on his banker. "Pay Robert S. the sum of £20, if he has no money of his own." "Na l" said Robert, "I winna hae't."

The islanders are brave and hardy. During the season of egg-gathering they may be seen at one time climbing a precipice to rob the nests, at another swinging from the face of a rock with nothing between them and almost certain death but a rope round their waists. They thus naturally acquire the habit of talking of danger and even of death in a way that seems to indicate indifference to both. Probably few, however, reach the degree of coolness exhibited by an old man who went out one day with his son to gather eggs. The son descended the face of a high rock with one end of a rope round his waist, the other being fastened to a stake above, while the old man remained in his boat at the base in case of accident. The precaution was not unnecessary, for the rope or the stake gave way, and the lad fell into the sea. There was a considerable ground-swell, and the poor boy had sunk once or twice before his father could rescue him, but at last he was taken into the boat almost lifeless. This elicited from the father the simple remark,

"Eh! I'm thinking thou's wat, Tam." The saying that those born to be hanged will never be drowned, is probably no truer of hanging than of other deaths. Tam was reserved for a different but scarcely more enviable fate. An acquaintance of the old man's, years afterwards, reminded him of Tam's escape, and asked what had become of him, to which the father replied in the same indifferent tone, "Tam? our Tam? Oh! Tam gaed awa' to a far country and the haithens ate him."

For another similar anecdote I have the trustworthy authority of an eyewitness. A man was one day gathering eggs on the face of a precipitous rock, and while stepping cautiously along a ledge little broader than the sole of his foot, he came to an angle round which he must pass. The wall-like steepness of the rock, and the narrowness of the ledge, made this under any circumstances difficult and dangerous. The difficulty, however, became an apparent impossibility when he found that he had the wrong foot first. To turn back was impossible, to get round the corner while his feet were in that position was equally so. The danger was observed by my friend who related the incident, and who looked on with terror at the awful consequences of a false step or stumble.

The man paused for a minute, took off his broad bonnet, in which he carried, as was customary, his snuff-horn, and, after taking three hearty pinches, replaced the horn in his bonnet and his bonnet on his head. Then straightening himself up, he made an agile little spring, got the right foot first, rounded the point, and reached the top in safety. My friend, who waited for his ascent, said to him, "Man, Johnnie, were you not feared?"

"Eh, man, if I had been feared, I wudna be here."

"I daresay that," replied my friend; "but what made you think of taking a snuff when you were in such danger?"

"Weel," he answered, with admirable simplicity and truth, "I thocht I was needin't."

One can scarcely dismiss Orkney without a short reference to North Ronaldsay, the most primitive, most curious, and most remote of the whole group. It is also the most difficult of access. Perhaps I was unusually unlucky, but I made four attempts to reach it without success. With the fifth I succeeded. There was not then, as now, an inter-insular steamer. The firth between Sanday and North Ronaldsay is a dangerous one, and wind and tide must be carefully consulted. If you start too late to reach

it before the turn of the tide, you are almost certainly carried back to your starting-point, unless the wind be all the more favourable. The island is very flat, the highest elevation being less than fifty feet. What strikes one at first sight as most peculiar is a drystone wall, which goes right round the island a little above high-water mark, between five and six feet in height, with small holes left in it at regular intervals. It serves the double purpose of depriving the winds as they pass through it of the saline vapour which used to blight the crops, and of keeping the sheep out on the shore. The grass is very valuable, being required for the cattle, so the sheep must have other fare. What other fare than grass, we naturally ask, can a sheep have? Seaweed, nothing but seaweed, and small patches of *Plantago maritima*, or similar stunted herbage. From January to December hundreds of sheep stroll about, like the pariahs of the brute creation, outside that inhospitable wall. They are called wild sheep, are lean and scraggy and more like goats.

I found 81 pupils on the school roll, and only 8 different names. Every one is a cousin, uncle, or aunt to everybody else on the island. The average attendance is 30, but on the day of my

visit the weather was very boisterous and only 5 were present. Almost every rood is cultivated. There are therefore no peats, and there is no wood except when an unfortunate ship is wrecked. Coals are very expensive. To obtain a supply of fuel they have recourse to an expedient practised by the Arabs, and, I think, also by the inhabitants of Cornwall. Every family has a cow, and when the byre is cleaned out, the dung-heap is not used for manure but is mixed with straw, cut into pieces, and dried in the sun. At the end of a year it is fit for burning. One can understand why the cow is made so much of. It is not every animal that can supply meat, drink, clothing, and fire. There was then no inn on the island, and there is probably none now. The minister was from home, and I was thrown on the hospitality of a farmer, whose genuine kindness I shall not soon forget, and with whom I spent a very pleasant day and night. I found him a very ingenious, clever fellow, who could turn his hand to anything, and do everything well. He united in his own person the varied offices of farmer, watchmaker, smith, carpenter, kelp-maker, and if I am not mistaken, doctor, in all of which capacities he was purely self-taught. He had never been

farther south than Kirkwall, and had no desire to leave his little world, to which he was passionately attached. He knew all about it; but his knowledge, like charity, though it began at home did not end there. He was well up in the politics of the day, had a keen sense of humour, was full of anecdote, and well acquainted with the works of Scott, Thackeray, and Dickens.

I have a most favourable opinion of the Orcadian and Shetland character. In it industry, self-reliance, and courage are combined with the gentleness more frequently found in woman.

In addition to other amiable qualities the people are exceedingly hospitable. I found them so, and I have no reason to think they have changed. Any person with a fair appearance of respectability can count on a most kindly reception at an Orkney or Shetland fireside. Some one has called hospitality a savage virtue. Be it so; then some savage things are very lovely, estimable, and of good report, furnish memories that will stand the tear and wear of many a long year, and, amid a desert of, it may be, polished but meaningless conventionalities, retain a freshness unfading and unchangeable, like all things good and genuine.

Among the many happy reminiscences of my sojourn in the north not the least memorable are those connected with the late Colonel Balfour of Balfour and Trenabie, whose acquaintance I made early in my official career, and whose friendship I enjoyed till his death. His beautiful castle on the island of Shapinsay, about five miles from Kirkwall, must have caught the eye of the tourist, and his splendid hospitality is well known to a wide circle of men eminent in literature, law, archæology, and folklore. A man of culture, wide reading, exquisite taste in art and music, a generous landlord, and the very soul of kindliness, he was beloved by his tenantry, and highly respected by all who knew him. During the sixteen years when my duties lay in that district Balfour Castle was my headquarters for a week or two every year, and I was very seldom the only guest. I happened to be there when a party of antiquaries, including Mr Farrer, Dr Joseph Robertson, Dr John Stuart, and the Rev. Dr Joass of Golspie, all well known to scholars and geologists for the width and accuracy of their knowledge, opened up the Maeshowe, the largest of those inscrutable mounds. It consists of a chamber fourteen feet square and twenty high, with a recess in each of three walls. The

walls are finely built and quite entire, though erected no one knows how long ago. A great many Runic characters were engraven on them, and an excited buzz tingled the ears and quickened the pulses of the whole antiquarian world. The mystery was at length about to be solved. Alas! the Runes when interpreted by experts proved next to nothing. The disappointment was scarcely less than that of the Antiquary on discovering that A.D.L.L. meant nothing more than "Aiken Drum's lang ladle."

The guests on another occasion were the officers of the Channel Fleet on their visit to the north; on another, General Burroughs, who is said to have been the soldier who first entered the Redan in the Crimean war; and almost every year Professor Aytoun on his visit to his sheriffdom of Orkney and Shetland. All such meetings were delightful and exceedingly interesting, and even when (which was seldom) Colonel Balfour and I were left to a *tête-à-tête* over our evening pipes in the smoking-room, there was no want of conversational topics, such as art, poetry, travel, archæology, and history. The figure which bulks most largely in my recollection of those visits is Professor Aytoun. Those who knew him will readily understand what a charming addition he

made to such a company as I have mentioned, and will remember how, over his evening tumbler and cigar, his features, which in repose were somewhat heavy and almost uninteresting, were lit up by the merry twinkle of his expressive eyes, and with what charm and point he narrated humorous incidents of his personal and professional experience. I remember a most humorous account he gave of his second marriage tour. He was passing through Cologne, which he had previously visited, and required no guide through the cathedral. He wished, moreover, to revel again in its marvellous beauty and have a deliberate walk through it with his young wife, undisturbed by the ever-present officious commissionaires ready to pounce on all tourists. He knew how persistent they were in their offers of guidance, and how difficult to shake off, but he resolved not to be victimised, and he succeeded. "I was walking," he said, "up the aisle when a commissionaire, who thought from my dress that I was an Englishman, came up and offered his services in fairly good English. I put on my most stupid look, and shook my head, as if I didn't understand him. He felt he was on the wrong tack, and thought I might be a Frenchman, and repeated his offer in French. Of course

having failed to understand English, I was not going to understand French, and I again stared at him stolidly and again shook my head. Failing a second time, his next attempt was Italian, which I again refused to understand, with if possible a still more unintelligent look. Spanish was now resorted to, with of course the same result. When he got at last to the end of his tether, I turned round and said with the broadest Scotch accent I could command, 'Man, ye bletherin' eediot, I canna mak ayther heid or tail o' a single thing ye've been gabbling aboot.' This settled him, and finding me hopeless he left me to myself."

The Professor had a story of a very taciturn witness from whom an advocate could get only the shortest of answers. Hoping to tap a source of free speech by referring to his native place, he asked where he lived.

"Sorn," said the witness.

"That is a village in Wigtown, isn't it?"

"No."

"It is a very healthy place, I suppose?"

"Yes," said the witness.

"Now, do people often die in Sorn?"

"Just aince."

CHAPTER XIV.

SHETLAND—FAIR ISLE—A PURPOSE OF MARRIAGE—FOULA—A RUNNING COMMENTARY ON THE LAST CHAPTER OF ECCLESIASTES.

In the early years of my service there were only three or four schools in Shetland to which an annual visit was due, and there was only one steamer a-week. I had consequently three or four days which I usually employed in visiting other schools, with a view to induce the teachers to become certificated. In 1865 two friends, the Rev. Drs Mitchell of South Leith and Elder Cumming of Glasgow, were making a cruise among the islands on business connected with the Home Mission Scheme of the Church of Scotland, and I was tempted to join them in a visit to Fair Isle, on which I had not yet set foot. It lies about midway between Orkney and Shetland. We set sail in the cutter Nelson on a perfectly beautiful morning. The wind, though fair, was extremely light, so much so that for a time we

realised Coleridge's idea of "a painted ship upon a painted ocean." After a long sail we got near the island, and found the rocks so absolutely wall-like that there seemed no spot where it was possible to land. There are, however, on the east side two little creeks towards which the captain steered. We saw a considerable number of people on the sky-line, who were evidently watching our movements with interest. When it became clear that we were making for the landing-place, there was a simultaneous rush off in different directions, and in a few minutes all but a few had disappeared. This puzzled us a good deal at the time, but was afterwards explained. The skipper rowed ashore and told those who had not scampered off that two ministers were on board the cutter on a missionary cruise among the islands, and were going to land. On his return he told us that the people had run off, thinking our vessel was a revenue cutter with an officer on board in search of possible deposits of tobacco smuggled from the Dutch fishing-boats, a number of which were then in the neighbourhood. The news that ministers and not excisemen were about to land spread like wildfire, and there was a rush of men, women, and children to the creek. Two boats were pushed off, the crew of one consisting

of five nice-looking boys, the other of full-grown men. They were soon alongside, and sprang on board with a not disagreeable absence of ceremony arising from eagerness and excitement. On landing we found a considerable crowd awaiting us. Singularly enough it happened to be the fast day, and the arrival of two ministers was regarded as a specially providential occurrence. They were pressed to stay over Sunday and assist the missionary in celebrating the communion. It was pointed out that this was impossible; that the arrangements for visiting as many of the islands as possible were all made, and that they were quite unable to give three or four days to one island. All seemed satisfied with this statement except the missionary, who, with a persistence and earnestness strangely out of keeping with what seemed a decidedly lymphatic temperament, pressed us to stay over Sunday. This being still refused, he begged us to stay over one night at least. Thinking that he had perhaps some special reason for persisting in his request, we asked him, and got for answer that he had just thought of improving the occasion of the presence of two ministers by getting married, there being no resident minister who could tie the knot, and it might be a long time before he would have

another opportunity. As he had reached the mature age of at least forty, his proposal could not be objected to on the ground of youthful indiscretion. It was, besides, an indication of spirit and activity so totally at variance with the general bearing of one, the motions of whose spirit seemed

"dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus,"

and of such good promise, that his request was thought worthy of consideration. It was accordingly suggested that as there were to be three services in different parts of the island during that day, the proclamation could be made at each, and the marriage take place in the evening. It was not forgotten that proclamation of banns at week-day services was unusual, but the circumstances were peculiar and the emergency great. The would-be bridegroom said he was not sure that that would do.

"Hadn't you better," said one of us, "go to your bride and see what she says about it?"

"Well," he replied, "I would need to see her *at any rate*," with a significant emphasis on the last three words.

"What, have you not spoken to her about it at all?"

"Oh no," he replied. "I was just going to ask her. I think she will marry me, but I thought it better not to ask her till I knew whether you could stay till to-morrow."

He went and saw her, and came back somewhat downcast, saying that she thought it was "awfu' sudden,"—that she had no objections to marry him provided the ministers could wait till to-morrow, but it was too hurried to be proclaimed and married on the same day. We could not wait, and, so far as I know, the poor man is still in the misery of single blessedness.

He had not been long in the island as a missionary, and was supposed to combine the duties of preacher and teacher. I can say nothing about his efficiency in the former capacity, but it was evident that in the latter he had done nothing. I visited the schoolhouse, which had obviously been long disused. I found it dismantled, part of the roof off, three tables that had served for desks, one form whole, another broken. The sole occupant was a hen, perched comfortably on a joist over which there remained a fragment of the roof. There was abundant evidence that the building had for a long time been used as a henhouse. The parents expressed great anxiety for the resump-

tion of school-work. There is now a school, which is regularly under inspection.

There are some families of Methodists in the island. They were present at some of the services, and interspersed the sermons with a succession of Scripture phrases, sighs, ejaculations, and groans, some of which seemed singularly misplaced. Formerly, and it may be still, it is said that the excitement of a rousing sermon produced convulsions. A Shetland minister, observing that this had a very distracting effect on the rest of the congregation, recommended sudden immersion in cold water as a sovereign remedy, which, it is said, served the double purpose of immediate cure and ultimate prevention.

The ministers having accomplished the object of their visit to Fair Isle, made ready to start for the island of Foula, lying about twenty miles west of the mainland of Shetland, and fifty from Fair Isle. Our skipper said that we should have a good tide for Foula at midnight. After a late sermon in the church, which was filled from corner to corner, we made our way to the shore accompanied by a great portion of the congregation. Some had not yet got Bibles, and rowed out with us to the cutter to

get them. It was a very striking midnight scene. The clergymen handing Bibles and religious books to a group of eager claimants, the almost breathless stillness of the night, the hour, and the locality, one of the least frequently visited spots under his Majesty's sway, combined to invest the scene with a peculiar interest.

We must, however, get clear of the island before the tide turns. Good-bye is accordingly said, and we set sail much pleased with our visit, and with a very kindly feeling towards those interesting islanders. Owing to the lightness of the wind it took us twenty-eight hours to reach Foula, which from its great height was provokingly visible for a great part of the time. It is not so large as Fair Isle, but more picturesque. Viewed from the east it presents a serrated appearance, having five large hills, the highest of which is above 1400 feet. The inhabitants did not show the same interest in our visit as the Fair Isle men, the reason probably being that they have more frequent intercourse with the mainland, and also because not more than one-fourth of the population belonged to the Established Church. The great majority were Methodists. Dr Elder Cumming remembered having seen, on a similar visit three years

before, an old man of ninety-four years of age, and, hearing that he was still alive, we went to see him. He was apparently in good health, and in full possession of his faculties, but a martyr to rheumatism. He gave us a very hearty welcome, and Dr Cumming after some conversation asked if he might read a chapter from the Bible and engage in prayer. The old man readily assented, and the Dr took a seat under the large opening in the roof, which did double duty as chimney and window, and chose the last chapter of Ecclesiastes as specially suitable in a short service for the benefit of one over whose head the summers and winters of ninety-seven years had passed. He listened with the greatest attention, and anxious to show that he understood the scope of the chapter, and that the minister was not spending his labour for that which profiteth not, he accompanied the reading with a running commentary in a subdued but audible voice which was very trying to the reader, and at some parts provocative of more than a broad smile. For example:—

Dr Cumming. "The strong men shall bow themselves."

The Old Man. "I was a strong man ance, but I'm a weak man noo."

Dr Cumming. "And the grinders cease, because they are few."

Old Man. "Ay, that'll be the teethache."

Dr Cumming. "And those that look out of the windows be darkened."

Old Man. "Ay, that'll be when the sicht fails."

Dr Cumming. "Because man goeth to his long home."

Old Man. "We maun a' gang there sometime."

This went on more or less through the whole chapter. The Dr, as the person more immediately concerned, and sitting in the fierce light from the hole in the roof, heroically kept a perfectly grave countenance throughout, but others were not so successful, and truth compels me to admit that "the teethache" was responsible for a sound that cannot be characterised as other than an unsuccessfully suppressed snigger.

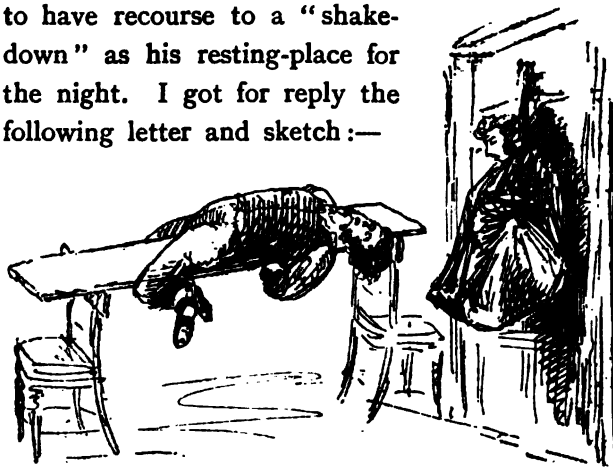
I visited almost every island in Shetland, and everywhere was treated with the greatest kindness. During the past quarter of a century almost the whole of my numerous friends there have passed away.

CHAPTER XV.

GENERAL HOSPITALITY—THE MINISTER'S MAN—REV. DR HANNA—"RAEL COAMFORTABLE"—"SHE TAK'S A BIT BLAW HERSEL'"—"CA' YE'T NAETHING TO BE FORCED TO GANG TO THE KIRK ILKA SUNDAY?"—"YE HADNA YOUR PURSE OOT HERE"—PATHETIC CONTRAST—THREE DINNERS.

I SHOULD be guilty of great remissness as a chronicler, and of ingratitude as a guest, if I failed to put on record the almost invariable hospitality shown to me during the whole of my official life, and especially in the earlier part of it, and in country districts when the correspondents for the schools were usually the ministers of the parish, sometimes proprietors, sometimes factors, &c. Nothing could be heartier than the welcome or more genuine than the kindness with which one was greeted year after year. Every visit ended with the kindly "Haste ye back again." Often a well-chosen party of friends was invited to assist in passing a pleasant evening. I was naturally anxious to make a

return for all this hospitality, and when at home had frequent opportunities of doing so. On one occasion I invited a friend from the North to pay me a visit when he could, and promised that if my house was full I would do my best to make him comfortable, even if it should be necessary to have recourse to a "shake-down" as his resting-place for the night. I got for reply the following letter and sketch:—



"I am much obliged by your comforting suggestion anent the shake-down at Aberdeen. Believe me, if I thought you were in town when I find myself there, I should go to you had I no better prospects for the night than being the occupant of a shelf like his Grace late of Wellington, or a soiled-linen bag or basket-berth behind your bedroom door."

The Scottish minister with a sense of humour finds in the working of his parish abundant materials for interesting and amusing conversation. His personal dealings with his parishioners furnish him with anecdotes delightfully fresh. The unconscious drollery and quaintness of the minister's man, though perhaps less pronounced than formerly, are not yet extinct, and specimens of it are often narrated with the genuine faculty of a raconteur. One mentions an amusing incident, and, stimulated by the example, a second follows with another suggested either by similarity or contrast, and the ball is kept rolling till the evening has passed all too quickly. All anecdotes lose immensely when committed to paper, and the tone and manner of the narrator are absent. I remember the late Rev. Dr Hanna, Dr Guthrie's colleague, bewailing to me, in a tone midway between jest and earnest, the probable appearance in print of one of his very good stories. "Isn't it shameful," he said. "A story that I have been using at intervals for a month past, and which would have done duty for another half year, is going to be printed, and I shall never dare to tell it again." I said I should like to hear the story, and he was

good enough to tell it to me. His version, to the best of my recollection, was this. Dr Balfour, the minister of Colinton—and grandfather of Robert Louis Stevenson—was a man highly respected by all who knew him. His coachman was a model of punctuality, and a favourite with his master's circle of friends. On one occasion when Dr Balfour was dining with one of his neighbours, John was ordered to have the carriage at the door at ten o'clock. Knowing John's strict punctuality, and as it was a winter night, Dr Balfour proposed to leave so as not to keep his servant shivering in the cold. The party, however, was a very pleasant one, and the host, anxious to keep Dr Balfour a little longer, said he would give John a dram to console him for the delay. This dram he took kindly. Shortly afterwards the hostess, with whom John was a great favourite, in passing through the hall saw him at the door, and, not knowing that he had already got a dram, offered him a second, which John did not refuse. By-and-by the butler, John's intimate friend, ignorant of the two previous drams, offered him a third, to which also he made no objection. At last Dr Balfour came away, got into his carriage, and John mounted the box and drove off. He

had not gone many hundred yards when he pulled up and, going to the carriage window, gave it a hearty tap, saying, "Are ye coamfortable, Dr Balfour?"

"Yes, John, I'm quite comfortable."

"Are ye sure ye're quite coamfortable, Dr Balfour?"

"Yes, John, I'm quite sure I'm comfortable. Why do you ask?"

"Weel, Dr Balfour, I'm just rael coamfortable mysel'." He then mounted the box and drove home.

The tendency on the part of coachmen to yield to gentle persuasion of this kind seems not to be confined to dwellers north of the Tweed, if credence is to be given to an incident of a somewhat similar type described to me lately by a canon of the English Church. Archbishop Thomson, on returning from a dinner-party, discovered from the very wobbling motion of his carriage that his coachman had been receiving very generous treatment in the kitchen of his host, and, apprehensive of possible misadventure, ordered him to come down and go inside the carriage, the Archbishop himself mounting the box and taking the reins. The night was very dark. On reaching the palace

gate the porter opened it, and, supposing that Robert was as usual on the box, asked in a low voice, "Well, how is the old bloke to-night?" to which his reverence, maintaining his incognito, replied, "Oh, the old bloke is inside the carriage drunk."

Stories of this kind were being told one night at a dinner-party in a country manse, when I took occasion to tell how I had been led astray by the sly humour of the minister's man at Lintrathen, who was driving me to a school in that Forfarshire parish. John and I were enjoying our morning pipe when, in the absence of any more interesting topic, I asked him if he smoked much, to which, in broad Forfarshire Scotch, he replied, "Ay, I tak' a gude reek."

"I suppose, John, you could not give it up now?"

"Weel," he replied, "I wudna like to gie't up."

"But you couldn't give it up? Could you?"

"Oh, I could gie't up. I hae gien't up."

"Have you really? Is it long since?"

"Ay, it's twa year since."

"And did you give it up for long?"

"I gied it up for sax month."

"And what made you begin it again?"

"Weel, it was my wife made me begin again."

This gave me an opening for some moral reflections of which I promptly took advantage. I may premise that I had never seen and knew nothing of John's wife.

"Well, John, I am glad you have such a sensible wife. She just thought you were too old a man to give up a habit you had acquired when young, and that you might spend sixpence a-week in many a worse way than on two ounce of tobacco." I paused for a few seconds, expecting a reply of some kind, but John was silent, and I resumed my comments on his wife's good sense, saying, "She probably found the house more comfortable for both herself and you when you were having your smoke. You were perhaps a little cross when you were not getting it, and your wife showed great good sense in making you begin again." I continued in this strain for some time longer in praise of the unselfishness of his better half, when I thought I detected an amused smile and a sly twinkle in John's eye, and then came the remark, "I'm nae just sure that she wad hae been sae ready makin' me tak to the pipe again, but she taks a bit blaw hersel', and when I gied it up she had to gie't up, and she wantit to begin't again hersel'."

There was in John's composition a certain

amount of self-assertion and inoffensive conceit, born of long service and responsibility for the management of the glebe. When talking to me of the Rev. Dr Chree, the excellent parish minister of Lintrathen, a man of wide reading and high culture, with, however, only a secondary interest in matters agricultural, but for whom John had in everything but farming the most unbounded respect, John remarked, "Ay, he's a rael fine cratur, but he has nae sense" (meaning as to management of the glebe).

One day when Dr Chree and he were standing together near the manse, some people passing by respectfully took off their hats. Dr Chree, for whom no doubt the salutation was meant, not recognising them, asked John who they were, to which John replied, "I dinna ken *them*, but it appears to be some folk that kens *me*."

A different type of man was the beadle of Gamrie in Banffshire, who when requested by the minister to do some little work in the garden, replied, "Na, I'm nae paid for doing that."

"Man, Robert," said the minister, "you are well enough paid for all you do; you get" (mentioning his wage) "for ringing the bell for a few minutes on Sunday, and for laying the Bible

and psalm-book in the pulpit, and that is all you do."

"Ay," replied Robert, "and ca' ye't naething to be forced to gang to the kirk ilka Sunday?"

The Rev. Mr Cruden, in relating the incident to me, admitted that Robert's remark was not complimentary to his preaching, but he thought it had sufficient humour to make it worth repeating.

The beadle of Kilwinning church was another who not unnaturally expected any service apart from his regular duty to be recognised with more or less generosity. He had, however, greater delicacy, but not less point, than the Gamrie beadle in making known his expectation of recompense. He was in the habit of showing visitors over the remains of the abbey in that parish. On one occasion he had done so for a lady who on leaving him at the churchyard gate offered him only barren thanks, to which the wily Robbie replied, "Weel, my leddy, when ye gang hame, if ye fin' oot that ye have lost your purse, ye maun recollect that ye havena had it oot here."

On another occasion Robbie had to dig a grave for the wife of a well-to-do but niggardly farmer. He was accordingly prepared for some bargaining on the farmer's part about payment for his work.

When the interment was duly completed the farmer said to Robbie that he was obliged to him for the trouble he had taken.

"Oh," said Robbie, "there's nae sense in that, ye ken. It's just four-and-saxpence."

"Four-and-saxpence! I thought you beadles did this for nothing."

"Oh, faith no. I just ay get four-and-saxpence."

"I'll not give you four-and-saxpence. I'll give you half-a-crown."

"Faith, I'll no tak it."

"Well, if you'll not take half-a-crown, you'll get nothing."

"Very weel," said Robbie, digging his spade into the grave, "Dod, up she comes."

Robbie got his four-and-saxpence.

Another sexton, on whose features there was always an obvious though partially suppressed smile when he was engaged in the gloomy function of filling up a grave, was asked the reason of this, and replied, "Man, I'm aye gled it's no me."

Exceptions to hospitality of the heartiest kind were exceedingly rare. Only one outstanding case occurs to me. A Rev. Doctor, who was correspondent for the school in his parish, never failed to put in an appearance during the in-

spection. After remaining for a short time he asked me year after year the same question—viz., "About what time will the examination be over?" On being answered two or three o'clock, as the case might be, he invariably expressed deep regret that he had an engagement at one or two (always an hour sooner), otherwise he would have been glad to see me at the manse. I learned to expect with certainty his question and regretful rejoinder.

In pathetic contrast with manses where, either from private means or good stipend, the *ménage* is comfortably elastic, and free from constant and necessary keeping down of butchers' and bakers' bills, there are others in the islands and on the mainland in the north of Scotland where the family is large and the income small. I remember inspecting a school, the correspondent for which was an old fellow-student in Glasgow. He was a highly distinguished scholar, of blameless character, and a good preacher, but had not yet been lucky in the race for success. He had married early, had a pretty large family, and a small income. He asked me as an old friend to take dinner with him after the inspection. I accepted the invitation. The dinner was simple but quite satisfactory: first a plate of excellent

broth, then the beef with which it had been made, and then a nice bread pudding. When the last appeared on the table, evidently as much to the delight as beyond the expectation of his children, one of his boys, about seven years, looked up beamingly in his father's face and said, "Daddy, we're getting three dinners to-day." There was pathos in the obvious inference that the usual dinner consisted of a single course. The dinner was nicely served, and, I believe, cooked by the minister's wife. There was no appearance of a servant in the establishment. I am glad to add that a good many years ago he got promotion, which he had long deserved.

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CHAPTER XVI.

AMUSING ANSWERS FROM TRAINING COLLEGES AND HIGHER GRADE SCHOOLS—"A WHILE AT EVERY CLASS"—"LASH HIM"—DUCK AND HEN—"NAKED AND NOT ASHAMED"—LEECHES—FRENCH AND GERMAN BLUNDERS.

FOR a number of years I spent a week or two in Glasgow in connection with Training College examinations. The somewhat dreary work of revising papers of candidates for admission to the colleges and for teachers' certificates was occasionally relieved by deliciously ludicrous answers. I have notes of many of them, a few of which may bear being recorded.

Twenty years ago the examination papers had the questions printed on the margin, with ample space opposite for the written answers. A paper on school management proved a very hard nut to crack for a poor lad from one of the Western Isles.

One question was, "Draw up a specimen of a time-table for a school of 120 scholars conducted

by one teacher and two pupil-teachers." To do this properly, having regard to the different branches to be taught, the time due to each, and the proper employment of the three members of the staff during the four or five school hours, twenty minutes or half an hour would not be an unreasonable allowance. Poor Norman's duty was to quote the number of the question, and write the answer on the ample space opposite. A time-table was something entirely new to him, and he felt he had not much to say. He thought, however, that he might as well fill up the space appointed, and accordingly wrote out, quite unnecessarily, in a good bold hand, the heading of the question, "Specimen of a time-table, &c. . . . two pupil-teachers," and below it the answer, "A while at every class," and not a word more.

The next question was, "Explain what is meant by education, instruction, and teaching as distinguished from each other." This was dealt with in the same way, and the answer, short and comprehensive, was, "Education is to give us the knowledge of everything in this world and the world to come."

The third question which he attempted to answer was, "Give four or five practical rules for

the guidance of a teacher with reference to punishment"; and the answer, "First lash him, then take off the trousers, then make him stand on a stool in the presence of the scholars, then put him out of the school." It is perhaps unnecessary to remark that the *him* is not, though it seems to be, the teacher who was to be subjected to this very drastic guidance.

A paper on religious knowledge had as one of its questions, "Explain as you would to a class the meaning of one or two of the following sentences." Half-a-dozen or so were quoted, one of which was, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." This was chosen by the same Highland student, who wrote, "This just means that the evil committed at the present day is quite sufficient without any more."

Another Highland lad, in answer to the question as to the benefits to be derived from sensible teaching of grammar, wrote, "In grammar the benefit which I would expect to derive from it is, that they would come to speak the English language proper, and that they would come to know the way to parse, and correcting each other even when children would be at play. Grammar will make him to avoid mispronounciations [*sic*] of words, the proper sounds of the different letters

and words, and the proper methot [*sic*] of conjoining words into sentences."

On the question of punishment, he wrote, "When the child would come late to school, I make him to go to the bottom of the class, and to allow all the class to moke [*sic*] him, and to explain to him that he was doing a great loss to himself. I would expect that this would cure him a little in coming earlier."

In a paper on domestic economy, one of the questions suggested a comparison between the duck and the hen. One girl described the duck most accurately, its shape, size, food, habits, &c., ending with a remark quite correct in itself, but for which she unfortunately attempted to give a reason. "The duck has an awkward waddling gait, because its hind-legs are longer than its fore ones." I thought from the otherwise perfect accuracy of her description that she had unconsciously made a slip, and that, probably fagged out at the end of a long examination, had mixed up in her account of the duck the longer hind-legs of the hare. But she went on to describe the hen with similar accuracy, and ended with the remark, "The hen has not an awkward waddling gait, because it has only two legs." It was clearly her deliberate opinion that the duck had four.

On the same paper there was a question, "Give reasons for avoiding extreme neatness and extreme slovenliness in dress." After a few very sensible remarks she wound up by saying, "It is a great sin to waste much time or money upon dress. Our first parents were naked and were not ashamed." She was doubtless quite unconscious of the logical consequence of her answer.

Another girl in giving a recipe for the making of Scottish broth got on beautifully up to a certain point in respect of quantity, quality, and time required by the several ingredients. She then finished by writing, "A few leeches may now be added if onions can't be had," evidently suspecting a vulgarity of savour about leeks which change of spelling might remove.

In dealing with answers to examination papers the examiner is much more apt to note absurdities for their piquancy, than to record the unobtrusive merit of sound attainment. A good full-blooded blunder has a distinct conversational value in being usually short and quotable, and always amusing. The produce of a healthy brain and hard work has none of these qualities, and is passed over unrecorded. While I have mentioned the foregoing, and still have others worth recording, it would be grossly unfair to represent them

as typical of the education given in Training Colleges, or as a measure of the mental calibre of the students generally. The university lists afford clear proofs of their industry and ability, and the professors in the Arts Faculty give hearty testimony as to their being a valuable element in the various classes, by their steady and successful application, and by the distinctions they have gained.

The following amusing blunders in French are selections from papers written by Training College students and pupils in higher class schools:—

"Je reçus à son adresse un coup d'épée dans la poitrine."

One writes, "I received in his house a letter in poetry."

Another, "I received his address on the back of his photograph."

"Montrez moi le chemin qui conduit à la ville."

"Show me the chemise that was made in the city."

"C'est lui qui mangeait mes confitures."

"It was he who managed my comforts."

"J'ai beau me défendre."

"I have a gentleman to protect me."

"C'est égal. Des qu'ils furent loin, je sortis de ma cachette."

"All the same, as furious as a lion I sorted my hatchet."

"A nos chagrins réels c'est une utile trêve."

"To our giddy reels this is a useful respite."

"Oublie de glaces de son âge."

(1) "Obliged to wear glasses by age."

(2) "Skating on the ice of his time."

When the fleet of Cortes arrived at Mexico a crowd came to see it "attiré par les spectacles," which was translated "dressed in their spectacles."

Four different versions were given of "I shall blow my nose." (1) "Je wiperai mon nez." (2) "Je blouerai mon nez." (3) "Je venterai mon nez." (4) "Je sifflerai mon nez."

To the question, "What is the difference in meaning between *seul* before, and after, a substantive?" the answer was, "*Seul* before, alone; after, drunk." Obviously a mistake for *soûl*.

One boy says, "Racine was the greatest tragedy-writer of the nineteenth century."

Parchemin is derived from "*par* = bye, and *chemin* = road, a side-road."

The following are German mistakes:—

Comparison of *voll:* "positive, *voll;* comparative, *über;* no superlative. Example, das Glas ist voll; das Glas ist über."

"Im Glanze der Abendsonne," "In the shadow of the moon."

In describing a religious man the sentence "denn er fürchtete den Hernn," was translated "for he frightened the gentleman."

Another translated "Sein Weib und seine Kinder sind in Armuth gerathen," by "His wife and his children are residing in Yarmouth."

Goethe is described as "A great German. He died last century, and wrote 'Faust up to date,' and some other little things."

CHAPTER XVII.

BEFORE 1872 MANY PARISH SCHOOLMASTERS IN THE NORTH WERE DIVINITY STUDENTS — AN OCCASIONAL HITCH — ONE TROUBLESOME — PRAYED FOR FOUR TIMES IN ONE DAY— RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION — HOMELY ESTIMATE OF MARY AND MARTHA—MINISTER AND TEACHER GENERALLY GOOD FRIENDS—ONE EXCEPTION—RELATION OF SCHOOL BOARD TO TEACHER OF MORE BUSINESS BUT LESS SYMPATHETIC TYPE THAN BEFORE—APPARENTLY LESS INTEREST ON THE PART OF PARENTS—AN AMATEUR SUTHERLAND EXAMINER.

BEFORE the passing of the Act of 1872 it was very common, especially in Aberdeen, Banff, and Moray, and even farther north, to find in charge of parish schools certificated teachers who were divinity students. These, in order to attend the short divinity session, appointed substitutes to take charge of their schools in their absence. Up to this time the minister of the parish was almost invariably the correspondent for the school. When the inspection fell within the currency of the session, the correspondent on receiving intimation of my visit wrote at once to the

teacher that he might be present on the day appointed. An inspector had no direct means of knowing of the temporary absence of the teacher if he found him at his post when the visit was made. Hitches, however, sometimes occurred through postal or other irregularities, and the absence of the teacher involved forfeiture of grant. This, I think, happened only twice in my experience. In one case the correspondent had addressed his letter to Aberdeen instead of Old Aberdeen, and the teacher did not get it in time to return to take charge of the school. It was a day of heavy snow, and I was strongly urged to name another day, and to give as a reason that snowstorm prevented me from reaching the school. The obvious reply to this was, "But I am here, and have reached the school." The grant was of course refused. In the other case the correspondent honestly accepted the inevitable. He had neglected to write to the absent teacher, and the grant here also was forfeited.

I had much more trouble in connection with a school in a remote corner of Ross-shire. It was small and very elementary. The correspondent was the minister, a most unreasonable ill-tempered man, continually quarrelling with his teachers, who often remained with him only

a few months. He was very far from being truthful, and as far from being abstinent in the matter of liquor. His English style was exceedingly confused and his penmanship atrocious. On one occasion, owing to frequent changes of teacher, I found the school in a wretched condition in almost every respect. The registers were badly kept, and none of the conditions on which the payment of grants depends were satisfied. When the grant was refused he wrote to the Department, complaining that I had not examined the school sufficiently, that I had passed over the Greek and the Hebrew, &c. There was no Greek in the school, nor, so far as I know, is Hebrew taught in any school in Scotland. This letter was sent to me for my remarks, and, on its return to the Department, passed into the hands of one of the examiners, an exceedingly mild, gentlemanly fellow, most painstaking and conscientious, but weak in analysing character, and with not much sense of humour. After struggling laboriously but in vain with the confused Gaelic-English, the almost illegible writing, and the reference to the overlooked Hebrew, he sent the document to Sir Francis Sandford, noting on it, "It is very difficult to make out what this correspondent means." Sir Francis,

with characteristic quickness, wrote in reply, "It is clear from his letter that the man is not *quite right*, and, living as he does in the remote north, has probably a small still in his parish."

Up to 1872 religious as well as secular instruction came under the supervision of the inspector. As a rule — though there were some exceptions—the ministers, who had up till then been correspondents for schools, welcomed the spread of Government inspection, and, wherever possible, chose for the traditional examination by the Presbytery the day intimated by me for the annual inspection, and shared with me the examination in religious knowledge. On one of these occasions the Rev. Mr Arklay of Inverkeillor told me a previous experience of his when the Presbytery were examining a school in a fishing village. It is perhaps worth relating as showing the normally very sparing use of soap and water by the children of fisher-folk. He was as usual opening the school with prayer, when the door opened, and an urchin with a face evidently fresh from the wash-tub appeared, and caused one of the pupils to exclaim in the middle of the prayer, "Lord Almichty, there's Jock White wi' his face *washed!*"

Many very worthy ministers were much exercised

about the dreadful results that were sure to follow the passing of Lord Young's Act, which removed examination in religious knowledge from supervision by the Education Department. Use and wont in teaching religion, they said, would not be maintained, and there would be an inevitable relapse into godlessness and heathendom. The correspondent for an excellent parish school in Aberdeenshire held this view. I ventured to say that I thought his fears were exaggerated and almost groundless; that use and wont would be generally maintained, and that, besides, I thought he attached more importance to the character of religious knowledge (as usually given) than it deserved; that, in the majority of cases, the so-called religious knowledge was rather Bible geography and Bible history than such teaching as inculcates the practice of Christian principles and the moulding of Christian character. He thought I was mistaken. So we agreed to test it to a certain extent in the very good school which I was about to examine. When the highest class was brought up I commenced an examination on the Shorter Catechism. Effectual calling, justification, sanctification, repentance unto life, &c., were repeated with scarcely a mistake. I then took up the Commandments, asking what commandment

says we must obey our father and mother? This was correctly answered. What commandment says we must not tell lies? There was a pause for a short time, and then one boy said the tenth, another the third. The oldest boy, not less than sixteen years of age and dux of the class, began to smile at these answers. I thought he knew the correct one, and asked him not to speak till I had gone round the class. Failing to get another answer, I turned to him and said, "Now, my lad, what do you say?" He replied, "There's none." The minister was surprised and shocked. I thought I scored.

The answer reminded me of the Jew to whom some one remarked that the Jewish weakness in respect of veracity was probably due to Moses' having merely forbidden the bearing of false witness, but not general falsehood, and who replied, "Yes, we stood a good deal from Moses, but we would not have stood that."

As long as the minister was correspondent for the schools in his parish he was generally present at the examination, and the proceedings were opened and—if he remained to the end of the examination — also closed with prayer. I was usually remembered in these petitions. It was felt, however, that the word "inspector" was

wanting in unction, or at any rate was not exactly a devotional expression. Custom had sanctioned "magistrates and those in authority" as a suitable periphrasis for "provost and bailies," and similarly the undevotional "inspector" was rounded off into "him who has come to visit this seminary of learning," or some such phrase. On one occasion when inspecting in one day two small and very elementary schools in Orkney under the same management, I was at least four times remembered in prayer, twice at the opening and closing of the first school, and twice at the opening and closing of the second. I have said at least four times, but I have an impression, which I hesitate to convert into a positive assertion, that I might with truth say five times, the fifth intervening between the two schools at a modest luncheon of bread and cheese and a glass of whisky in the house of a farmer who was one of the school managers. In the closing prayer at the end of the second school the worthy clergyman made special references to me, praying that I might have grace vouchsafed to me to give a good report of the schools. I need scarcely say that, as one of them was very far from satisfactory, grace did not abound to the extent prayed for.

On another occasion a clergyman who thought himself strong in metaphysics, but was thought by his friends weak in common-sense, accompanied me to the examination of a school of very young children which he opened with prayer, and at once plunged headlong into metaphysical language, among other petitions asking God to "give these children adequate receptivity — that is, make them thoroughly to understand what they are taught."

Very different in style, homelier in language, with a stronger smack of common-sense, though somewhat wanting in reverence, was the note of an Aberdeen teacher still alive, in discussing to his class the characters of Mary and Martha. "As for Mary, I dinna think muckle o' her. She was just a poor fushionless cratur', aye sittin' afore the fire wi' her hands owre ither, reading bookies, when she had better been cookin' her man's denner. And Martha wasna muckle better—aye guddlin' and scrubbin'. It was aye washin'-day wi' her."

And here I feel compelled to say a single word by way of protest against a not uncommon remark that ministers are not good business men, and ought not to be members of school boards. Business qualities in ministers differ as

they do in other men. I know some who are good, and others who are bad, business men. The presbyterial examinations were no doubt sometimes formal and not always very stimulative, but it should not be forgotten that before 1872 ministers were almost the only class who did anything for, or took much interest in, education, and that if they did little (which generally is not true), everybody else did less or nothing.

The relation between minister and teacher was, as a rule, hearty and pleasant, and quite unlike that between the English elementary teacher and his clergyman. I have been told (perhaps incorrectly) that the teacher of an elementary school in England, having occasion to call on the rector or vicar, would not venture to go up to the front, but must resort to the kitchen-door of the rectory. Such a menial-like acknowledgment of inferior social position would neither be expected by the minister nor dreamt of by the Scottish teacher. Oftener than not the teacher was one of the dinner-party at the manse when the inspection was finished. There were, of course, exceptions, but they were rare. Cantankerousness may be found in minister or teacher or both, and in such cases the results

are far from pleasant. In a parish in the north there was a bitter and long-standing quarrel between these two functionaries, arising from the minister's glebe and the teacher's land marching with each other, and the existence of a small piece of debatable territory to which each laid claim. On the merits I had no opinion, but from what I knew of the teacher's selfishness and general obliquity of vision in my official relations with him, I should be more than human if I could resist the impression that he was almost certainly wrong and the minister right. Year after year as I visited the school I had the greatest difficulty in preventing both from repeating over and over their grievances against each other, which, starting from the debatable land as a nucleus, had gathered, from year to year, strength and volume, till every action in the social or political life of each was coloured and disfigured by the very quintessence of uncharitableness. On one visit, when I luckily escaped the recital of wrongs, I asked the minister's man, who was also sexton, if the two were yet good friends. "Freends," he replied, "there'll never be peace in the parish till I get ane o' them aneath my thoombs." One of them has, I understand, reached that

haven of rest, and the other has probably ceased from troubling.

I have an impression, possibly an erroneous one, but it is based on my own experience, that the exchange of the genial fatherly interest taken in the school and schoolmaster by the correspondents of forty years ago, for the more strictly business but less sympathetic attitude of the school board, has been accompanied by a corresponding decrease of interest on the part of parents in the school-life of their children. It was formerly not at all uncommon to find parents present as interested onlookers during the inspection. This custom, which probably had its origin in the presbyterial examination by the minister of the parish and other neighbouring ministers, has, I think, largely fallen into abeyance. In the parish school in which I was educated there was at this annual examination quite a gathering of parents. I found the custom much the same generally in the north of Scotland, and I gave it welcome and encouragement. In connection with this custom I got from a large sheep-farmer in Sutherland an amusing account of a conversation he had heard between two Highlanders on the afternoon of the presbyterial examination day. Each had a daughter of

twelve years of age at the school, but only Duncan had been able to be present at the examination. Norman was otherwise engaged. They happened to meet near the little inn of Rhiconich, the vicinity of which suggested a dram. This was agreed to, as it was a cold raw day. Becoming by degrees confidential with each other, they began to discuss domestic matters, and among others the education of their children.

"I think," says Norman, "the best thing poor men like you and me can do with our small savings is to give it to the education of our children whatefer; and we should give more to the lassies than to the lads."

"I'm not so sure of that," replied Duncan. "Why?"

"Well, you see the lads will be able to work with a pick or a spade or a shovel or the like o' that, and make a living for themselves, but the lassies canna do that at all, but if you give them a good education they'll make a good marriage. Och yes, we must give more to the lassies than to the lads."

"Faith, Norman, I darsay you're fery richt there, and I'm sure there's not a man in all Sutherland can throw a stone at me for that.

Our Mary is the cleverest lassie in all Sutherland; there's not a lassie in the Reay country like her. She's a grand scholar our Mary."

"Your Mary?" said Norman.

"Yes, our Mary."

"I'll wager you my Jessie is as clever a lassie as your Mary."

"Your Jessie?"

"Ay, jist my Jessie."

"What will you wager, Norman?"

"Half-a-mutchkin."

"Done," says Duncan.

"But who will examine the lassies?" says Norman.

"Well," said Duncan, "I think you should let me examine them. You see, I have jist been down at the examination of Kinlochbervie school to-day, and the ministers wass there, and the parents wass there, and the ministers wass asking them questions, and the children would be answering them. It wass a grand sight, noble, and I wass there, and as I'll be jist fresh off the irons I think you should let me examine the lassies."

"Fery well, Duncan, you'll examine them."

The girls meanwhile were amusing themselves outside. Norman rang the bell and asked the

servant to send in Jessie. When she appeared Duncan commenced—

"Jessie, your father says you're a grand scholar, and as clever a lassie as our Mary. Now jist tell me this, do you know the meaning of a verrub [verb]?"

"No, I do not," said Jessie.

"That will do for you; just go you away and send in our Mary."

When Mary appeared Duncan said, "Now, Mary, I have been telling Norman that you're the best scholar in Sutherland. Jist show how clever you are. Do you know the meaning of a verrub [verb]?"

"Yes," in quite a triumphant tone, "it's a noun."

Duncan looks defiantly at Norman and says, "There, now, my friend, what do you think of that? Didn't I tell you she wass the cleverest lassie in the Reay country?"

"Well, I see she is cleverer than my Jessie whatefer. I have lost the half-mutchkin, and we had better send for it now," he added, contentedly ringing the bell.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FARM-SERVANTS TOO OFTEN REGARDED SIMPLY AS AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENTS—LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT OR OPPORTUNITY FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT—SAFEGUARDS OF A VIRTUOUS LIFE BROKEN DOWN—FEEING MARKETS—TOO FEW TWO-HORSE FARMS AS OBJECTS OF AMBITION—TOO FEW COTTAGES ON THE FARM FOR MARRIED MEN—AN EXAMPLE WORTHY OF IMITATION—THIS SLACKENING OF KINDLY RELATIONSHIP NOT CONFINED TO FARMERS AND FARM-SERVANTS.

DURING the fourteen years when my district was Aberdeen and the counties north of it, I had many opportunities of observing the social life and manners of farm-servants, or hinds, as they are sometimes called, and of conversing with people who lived among and were interested in them. I was painfully struck by the surroundings amid which their lives were spent, and felt that it was difficult to conceive of any conditions less favourable to the development of sound morality, manly effort, and healthy ambition for social advancement. I am glad to

learn that there has been some improvement during the past quarter of a century, but I know there is still ample room for more. The notes which I quote from my diary, written thirty years ago, will be found to represent to a large extent with approximate accuracy the present state of matters. As a rule, the farm-servant is regarded by his master as a creature from whom a certain amount of work is demanded, but with whose moral and intellectual condition he has, or need have, no concern. A man of strong will and earnest purpose can no doubt fight his way to advancement irrespective of his master's indifference, and some have done so, but the great majority of farm-servants, or servants of any kind, are not of this high type. The majority require opportunity and encouragement. Can it be said that they generally get either the one or the other? How few masters can say that their servants have opportunity for self-improvement by reading if they want it? How much fewer can say they have encouragement? The opportunity is a noisy kitchen with its distractions, or a comfortless bothy in which there is no privacy, or a badly lit sleeping-place in the loft above the stable. Surely more than this is needed and might be supplied. I am far

from saying that the servants are not to blame, but they are not alone to blame in their neglect of self-improvement. The same is to be said of their immorality, but they are the objects of much unthinking abuse.

> "What's done we partly may compute,
> But know not what's resisted."

There is no doubt much illegitimacy—in the circumstances the most inevitable of vices. Men and women are thrown together in the field, joining in work of (for women) a demoralising kind. Every restraint and safeguard of modesty and a virtuous life are broken down by their daily occupation and unchecked intercourse. What but the strongest virtue and very high moral principle (so high as to be beyond hoping for) could pass through such an ordeal unscathed either in fact or in feeling? The married farm-servant is usually a model of conjugal fidelity and self-denial. His wages, say from £30 to £40 per annum, are almost entirely devoted to the support of his wife and family. He spends little on himself, except perhaps for tobacco and a dram at a feeing market. Tipsiness at a feeing market is no proof of much whisky being drunk or much money spent. Living, as a rule, most temper-

ately, scarcely tasting spirits for six months, very little affects them. That they should to any extent transgress the limit of temperance is much to be regretted, but it is a little hard to grudge a man whose whole life is one of unremitting toil the leaven of a holiday, though the leaven be a little coarse. We all require our dough to be leavened somehow, the more harmlessly of course the better. In the environment of the farm-servant charity will find some palliatives. Farmers and others who decry the licence of the feeing market have, in respect of habitual drinking, more to answer for than farm-servants. The tendency towards a restless, roystering, and improvident life is increased by the comparative scarcity of two-horse farms as objects of ambition to the steady and prudent hind. In a country where almost all farms are large, the chance of rising above his position of toil seems to the average man so small that it is powerless to give a wholesome direction to his life and conduct. If, then, the higher pleasure of ambitious and probably successful effort is denied him, it may be expected that he will assert the universal, undeniable, and purely human claim to enjoyment of some kind, and take advantage of that of the feeing market,

as the traditional and only one attainable by those in his position. He *will* have in some form, coarser or finer, the relaxation, the change from toil, the unbending, the sense of freedom from restraint, which all grades of society claim as a right and necessity, and without which life would not be worth living, "flat, stale, and unprofitable." He knows that in a country district two-thirds of the paupers are old farm-servants, and reasons thus: "To lay past a competence for old age is out of the question; no ordinary industry will span the almost unbridgeable gap between farm-service and a farm; the poorhouse sooner or later awaits me. Why make a strenuous effort, to which ordinary weak humanity is not equal, to stave it off for a year or two. It is merely a question of time; let me

'Taste life's glad moments while the wasting taper glows;

let me pluck a rose while I may, though a prickle lurks behind the leaf; let me taste a little temporary sweetness, though the after-taste may be bitter."

This is no doubt foolish, but in view of the class with whom we are dealing, it is intelligible, and perhaps not entirely inexcusable. It is at any rate essentially human, and not the characteristic

of farm-servants alone. This state of matters is, I believe, more generally true of Banff than of Aberdeen. At the same time, I am told by those who know that unmarried men and women can, by judicious saving, lay past in the course of six or eight years enough to enable them to marry comfortably, and take in hand a two-horse farm.

So far, unmarried men and women have been mainly spoken of. What is the position of married farm-servants? It varies much, according as there are or are not a sufficient number of cottages on the farms where they are serving. Where the number is insufficient, the married servants can see their wives and families only once in a fortnight or three weeks. Where two are kept, one goes to his family, living in a neighbouring village, it may be, several miles distant, on the one Saturday, and returns on Sunday night to be ready for his work on Monday morning. The other does the same next Saturday. This is a miserable severing of family ties, and a blotting out of almost all the poor hind has to raise him above the level of the animals among whom he spends his life. Under such a system what influence can a man exercise over his children? What pleasure can he have in either his conjugal or paternal re-

lationship? Surely a man ought to live with his wife and family whenever such an arrangement is possible. It may be insuperably inconvenient for the soldier or sailor. It is not so for the farm-servant. No man will say that he ought not to marry. Granting this, there is surely something woefully wrong or wanting in a system which compels a man to lodge his wife and family four or five miles from the scene of his labour, if they might live with him, and, by their daily intercourse with him, elevate his humanity. Can it be said that it is unreasonable or impossible that the workers on a farm should have cottages somewhere on the farm? Would it be more expensive? It does not on the face of it seem so. The hind pays a rent for a house in a neighbouring village. Why may not the proprietor become his landlord at the same rate? If this arrangement were made, the farm-servant would come under the civilising and hallowing influence of a fireside and family hearth. While the proprietors would thus not lose interest on their outlay for buildings, would not the farmer directly, and he indirectly, gain by such an arrangement? It is well known that servants change from farm to farm in the most unattached way. Why should they not? They

are waifs and strays, without "hoose, ha', or hame," and one farm is as much a homestead as another. Would not the reverse be the case, if under any master they found that they had the comfort of home life with wife and family, goods and chattels, around them? The want of attachment, at present almost universal, between master and servant would thus be remedied. There would be a community of interest that would tend to the good of both. The servant would identify himself more with his master, would feel his own interest more or less co-ordinate with his, and there would be a gradual but steady advance in the humanity of a class who, as married men, show themselves capable of admirable self-denial on behalf of wife and children, and the up-growth of a body of men respectable and respected, with an increase of the mellowing civilisation and virtues which are essentially home-bred.

Surely the class of men who, on the meagre income above mentioned, contrive to support wives and families in the neighbouring villages, are worthy of more consideration than they receive under the present system. Besides, children brought up with their parents on the farm would probably grow up with tastes for agricul-

ture, instead of leanings towards either nothing or the vice and idleness of villages. I am told that proprietors are beginning to find from painful experience that an insufficient number of two-horse farms and cottages for farm-servants is a mistaken policy.

The difference in the relationship of the farm-servant to his master at present, and what it was fifty years ago, is very great, and much to be deplored. This is due partly to facility of locomotion by railway, but much more to the gradual decay of community of interest between employer and employed. Formerly changes were the exception, not the rule. Now men and women remove from one farm to another often for no reason but love of change. Formerly, a rumour that a servant was leaving his situation produced quite an excitement in the country parish, followed by such questions as, "Why is he leaving and where is he going?" It was also usual for the servant to ask from his minister a certificate of character. The precentor on Sunday immediately before the blessing was pronounced intimated in a loud voice that A B or C D was leaving the parish and wished to have a certificate of moral character, adding, "If any person has anything to say against him, noo's the time."

not only has this public form been discontinued, but it is probably very seldom that any desire is shown for such certification.

I know some ministers who take a warm interest in the condition of farm-servants, but a much larger number fail to show such living, quickening, and human interest as almost invariably meets with a more or less hearty response from even the most reckless and indifferent. I know a parish in the north where the bothy system is the rule, and in which, a few years ago, during the minister's absence on the score of ill-health, an assistant had charge of the parish for six months. He saw and pitied the poor hinds, who, as a rule, bulked no more largely in their masters' estimation than a plough, or reaping-machine, or other farm implement. He visited them in their bothies, smoked a friendly pipe with them, talked on subjects of a practical kind in which they took an interest—the possibility and advantage of thrift as a means of improving their social condition, and, in the case of married men, advancing the interests of their families—all this from a sympathetically human, rather than an aggressively clerical, standpoint. He had for his reward that, by the end of his six months' temporary assistantship, almost every

hind in the parish was a regular attendant at church. Surely his example is worthy of imitation.

This slackening of the old kindly relationship between master and servant is not confined to farmers and farm-servants. We seldom hear now of volunteered remarks from servants to a master or mistress which were formerly allowed, and which were not marks of forwardness, but of a homely familiarity in no sense aggressive or inconsistent with the greatest respect. Servants were not so much a class apart as they are now. An instance of which I was an earwitness occurs to me. The janitor of a public institution, a man well known and much respected, was often employed as waiter at private dinner-parties. On one occasion when the lady on my left hand declined to have any of the chartreuse which he was handing round, he thinking, perhaps correctly, that her refusal was due more to observance of feminine propriety than to dislike of the beverage, fell back on his experience as a waiter, and said in a low kindly tone, "It's quite allowable, Mrs M., it's quite allowable."

One can with difficulty imagine that now there could be such pactions between masters and servants as are said to have existed formerly

about alternately keeping sober with a view to safe driving home from dinner-parties. On one occasion when it was the servant's turn to "keep straight" he had found the good cheer of the kitchen too tempting. Feeling this, he went to his master in the dining-room and whispered into his ear, "Laird, ye had better tak' care; it's a' bye wi' me the nicht." Another laird who was in the habit of dining not wisely but too well had often profited by his servant's help in taking him from the conveyance and placing him safely in the lobby of his house. One night when this assistance was more than ordinarily beneficial the laird said, "Man, Robert, ye're a gude auld soul, and that horse has been a gude servant too. When you and that auld horse dees, dod! I'll stuff ye baith."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE ACADEMY OF OLD DEER—SIR GEORGE REID, PAUL CHALMERS, ROBERTSON SMITH, SIR DAVID GILL—LARGE DINNER-PARTIES A SOCIAL MISTAKE.

Of all the pleasant memories — and they are many—connected with my fourteen years' residence in Aberdeen, none exceed—I am not sure that any equal—in sweetness of savour the annual meetings, in the manse of Old Deer, of ten or twelve men of congenial tastes, who, without written constitution or formality of any kind, gravitated to that manse in the happy valley once a-year, under the influence of such a community of taste in art, literature, and social questions as made intercourse delightful, the interchange of opinion stimulative, and the evening's experience one of the brightest spots of the year. From the large element of art, practical or critical, represented by its members, the association — if one may dignify so small a thing by so grand a name

—was christened "the Academy of Old Deer." No one knows who suggested the name, but it was tacitly accepted as appropriate.

I am sure I may mention the names of that genial coterie without giving offence to those who are still with us, or to the friends of those who have gone over to the majority. They were our host, the Rev. James Peter, and his brother, the Rev. George Peter of Kemnay, both excellent parish ministers, of strong artistic leanings, and true-hearted friends, beloved by all who knew them; Mr (now Sir George) Reid and his brother, A. D. Reid, the gifted and lamented George Paul Chalmers, James Cadenhead, all eminent in the world of art; Professor Robertson Smith, too early called away, whose brilliancy of intellect requires no comment; John F. White, LL.D., a critical and cultured student of art, full of deep sympathy with it in every form, and an appreciation of it reached by few who are not themselves artists; Dr Gavin of Strichen, an admirable specimen of the rural Gideon Gray, a man of wide reading, cultivated taste, dignity of bearing, and large heart; Dr Cooper, a hard-headed, kindly, and, on occasion, caustic country doctor; Mr (now Sir David) Gill, K.C.B., the eminent astronomer at the Cape; and lastly myself. Sir George

and A. D. Reid, Sir David Gill, Mr White, Mr Cadenhead, and myself are the only survivors of that happy company.

After a dinner admirably served, and characterised in every respect by chastened taste and refinement, we settled down to such a comfortable, all-round talk *de omni re scibili et quibusdam aliis*, as is possible with eight or ten, but scarcely possible with a much larger number. It may be supposed that in such a company there was no lack of topics for discussion. It was understood, but without written enactment, that any one who chose to contribute anything in the shape of jingle would get a willing and attentive hearing. There was no meeting which was not enlivened by contributions in which rhyme and humour were creditably represented. It was supposed that our host had kept minutes of our proceedings, and that copies were preserved of at least some of the verses, which, all more or less humorous, and produced without high aim, effort, or the slightest view to permanence, were simple recognitions of the Horatian *dulce est desipere in loco*, and a pleasing variety amid graver topics. Among his papers none were found. One of the members, however, who has kept a copy of a song, has placed it at my disposal.

1.

"'Twas aff the coast near Peterhead,
In an equinoctial gale,
Five fishermen they hooked a cod
As big as an Arctic whale, brave boys,
With a fal, lal, &c.

2.

O then said ane until anither,
'We'll ne'er win back to shore,
For sic a cod for size and strength
We've never seen afore, brave boys,'
With, &c.

3.

Then the cod put up his heid and leuch,
'Ye'll no think me on-ceevil,
But or I consent to gang on board
I'll see you at the deevil, brave boys,'
With, &c.

4.

Then he took the line atween his teeth,
An' he flapped his michty tail,
An' aff he swam wi' the boat in tow
Like an engine on the rail, brave boys,
With, &c.

5.

But he soon grew tired and scant o' breath,
An' the sweat ran doun his nose;
So roun' he turned to the fishers an' said,
'I'll hae to gie in—I suppose, brave boys,
With, &c.

6.

'But tell me first—an' dinna think
It's rude o' me to speir—
What ye intend to do wi' me?'
'Ye're to gang to the Manse o' Deer! brave boy,'
With, &c.

7.

'An' gin I gang, what sort o' folks
Are they I'm like to meet?
I'm carefu' o' my company,
An' it's *me* they're gaun to eat! brave boys,'
With, &c.

8.

'O! there's White and Kerr and other men
Hae sworn on you to dine,—
They're frae the toon o' Aiberdeen.'
Says the cod, 'Haul in your line, brave boys,'
With, &c.

9.

'That Maister White! I mind him weel,
Wi' guid reason to do so,
For he heuket me in Gamrie Bay
Some saven years ago, brave boys,
With, &c.

10.

'An' for the lave, since they're Aiberdeen,
They maun be worthy men,
An' I wud sooner be eaten by them
Than by ony folk I ken, brave boys,
With, &c.

11.

'Ye should hae tauld me this at first;
I'd hae come o' my ain accord,
An' saved ye a' this weary wark,
So gie's a hoist on board, brave boys,'
With, &c.

12.

Then they hauled him in aboard the boat,
In a creel they did him pack,
An' they sent him aff to Manse o' Deer
On Betty Simpson's back, brave boys,
With, &c."

The literature of the nineteenth century has lost nothing by the disappearance of the rest, but their preservation would have been, by those of us still above ground, much valued as a record of some "winged words," much happy laughter, and delightful intercourse.

Apropos of such a company as I have tried to describe, I have often thought it a pity that the leaders of fashion in dinner-giving, whose means and hospitality are above suspicion, have not set an example of limiting to eight or ten the size of a dinner-party. With that number *bonâ-fide* social intercourse is possible, with twice that number practically impossible. Which of us has not felt, over and over again, that the

typical urban assemblage, in which upwards of twenty sit down to dinner, though a convenient way of paying off debts, is really a travesty of society, if by society is meant social intercourse? Even when the guests are well chosen in respect of tastes, intimacy, and general characteristics, the number is unwieldy. Oftener than not we feel that we have dined not with our host and hostess but with our right and left-hand neighbours, to whom we may or may not have been introduced, and with whom we may or may not have much in common. If the conditions of introduction and community of tastes are satisfied the result is enjoyable, but our real dinner companions are still only those on our right and left hands. A conversation cannot be conveniently bawled out across the table, nor can we with comfort or civility crane our necks up and down its length in order to talk with possibly dear but distant friends. Then, as to studious elaboration of courses in respect of both number and quality, there are probably few who have not felt that a reduction in the number would have been quite satisfactory and much better for us. After spending in this way an hour and a half or so in refusing or consenting to have injury

done to our digestion the ladies leave the room, and the gentlemen have a cigarette or two over a glass of wine. The drawing-room is reached in time to hear, it may be, a song or some piano-playing. Then follow "good-night" and a shaking of hands with the host and hostess, with whom we have probably exchanged only a few commonplace remarks, ending with "What a delightful evening we have spent!"

If this is a tolerably fair account of a typical big dinner-party, can it be said that either host or guest is to be congratulated on the result?

It is my duty to confess humbly that in this matter I am neither better nor worse than my neighbours. "*Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor.*"

CHAPTER XX.

"WATCHIE"—ADVICE ON MARRIAGE—PARODY OF TENNYSON'S "BROOK"—BROWNLOW NORTH—A LONG QUOTATION—SPURGEON—A TRIMMING PREACHER—AN AWKWARD ELDER.

ON one of my visits to Banffshire I made the acquaintance of a very interesting man, Mr Wernham, factor to the Laird of Troup, and correspondent for a school on the property. I spent the night with him, and in the course of a long talk got from him a sketch of his life simply and effectively told. He had been a soldier, and received his first impulse towards a military career from seeing the Scots Greys ride through his native town, Reading, on their way to Waterloo. He enlisted as a private at the age of eighteen with a determination to get promotion. In ten weeks he got his first step. Before long others followed, due to a combination of good behaviour and good luck, till, within little more than a year, he was on the

Duke of York's list recommended for a commission. I was struck by the shrewdness of his remarks about the secret of success in general, and in the army in particular. He attributed his own success largely to his accidentally hearing two of his superior officers making some remarks in his favour, which gave a spur and fixity of purpose to the ambition with which he had chosen a soldier's life. In course of time he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant riding-master. He had by this time got a wife and family, and, finding his pay inadequate for their maintenance without a pretty severe struggle, he quitted the service and accepted the factorship of Troup. Mrs Wernham was not less interesting than her husband. She had a rare collection of Scotch stories, which she told with admirable taste and skill. One of them I venture to reproduce.

A watchmaker in Banffshire, called, for short, "Watchie," was too much given to tippling, and shortened his life thereby. His wife after two years of widowhood was offered marriage by one of her neighbours, John Steenson, and accepted him. The night before her marriage a friend called to congratulate her, and found her crying.

"Dear me, Mrs Watchie, what are ye greetin' for?"

"Oh, ye ken I'm to be marriet to John Steenson the morn, and I canna forget Watchie the nicht."

"Nonsense! ye needna greet for Watchie. Ye were a better wife to him than he was a man to you. He was a puir daidlin', drinkin' body a' his days."

"Ay, that's true eneuch. He did tak' a wee drap owre muckle, but he wasna a bad body for a' that, and I just canna get him oot o' my heid, when I'm to get marriet to anither man."

"Oh, dinna fash your thoomb about Watchie. Ye hae been twa year a widow, and there's naething to be ashamed o' or sorry for."

"That's true, but I canna help wonderin' what Watchie wud say if he saw me gang cleekin' into heaven on John Steenson's arm."

"Dinna ye bother your heid aboot that. If Watchie is in his auld ordinar' he'll never notice ye."

She followed this up with that of another widow whose grief, apparently of the statutory kind, was perhaps more open to suspicion. The minister called the day after her husband's death to condole with her, and found her sitting in front of a large bowl of porridge. On his

referring to the serious loss she had met with, "Ay," she said, "it's a terrible loss to me. I've just been greetin' a' nicht, and as sune as I finish this wee drap porridge I'm just gaun to begin again."

Of a different and much more buoyant type was the widow who had worn out three husbands. When she told her minister that she was about to be married again, he remarked that she had been very unfortunate in losing her husbands. "Ay," she replied, "did ye ever ken ony body that was sae bothered as I hae been wi' puir deein' craturs o' men?"

The following is a good specimen of the worldly wisdom and pawkiness of an old gentleman in Aberdeenshire. He had retired from the army, and had a party of young officers dining with him. After dinner he said, "Noo, my lads, ye'll be thinkin' aboot marryin' by-and-by, and I wud advise ye to look oot for a lass wi' a puckle siller. I've tried baith ways o't. My first wife had nae siller, but my second had a gude puckle, and I got as muckle ill jaw frae the ane as frae the ither, and the siller was some comfort."

This theory on the subject of marriage reminds me that in a book which I read lately I found the following reference to an old maid: "Her fervour

now as a fanatic was as glowing and aggressive as had been her fervour as a flirt in her unregenerate days. In a word, she was a spiteful old maid, who found a free duct for her bile in the channel of religion." This may be true of many, but I have met with many others of whom it is a gross and cruel caricature. It has fallen to me to number among my valued friends not a few old ladies who have passed unwedded lives without losing an atom of the gentleness, kindliness, and charity of judgment which we regard as the prime attributes and crown of womanhood; ladies who could have been married had they regarded marriage as so many do, as the one goal of life; who in a spirit of self-sacrifice in some cases, and of self-respect in others, have decided that single blessedness was their manifest duty; whose good sense and sterling qualities enabled them to see, without envy or regret, their giddier sisters and friends accept the hand of the first tolerable suitor, and who retained to the last all the sweetness and sunshine of a contented life. No trace of acidity or spitefulness can be detected in the following parody of Tennyson's "Brook" by an old maiden lady, Miss Cruikshank of Fochabers, whom I knew well, and whose cheery talk and sparkling repartee were the admiration of all who knew her.

She died a good many years ago, and must have reached the allotted span of threescore years and ten when she penned the following lines, which strike me as worthy of being recorded. They must not be regarded as in any sense autobiographical, but quizzically descriptive of the typical or hypothetical old maid :—

"With many a care my life's beset,
My charms are growing mellow,
And I have not secured as yet
An eligible fellow.
I sing, I play, and through the dance
I skim like any swallow;
The neighbours look at me askance,
And say I'm vain and shallow.
I chatter, chatter, as I go,
And some pronounce me clever;
But men who come are very slow,
And pop the question never.

I gad about and in and out,
My luckless fate bewailing,
And think with secret pain and doubt
Of youth and beauty failing.
There is a youth for whose dear sake
To foreign lands I'd travel;
I thought he would an offer make
One evening on the gravel.
He spoke in accents soft and low,
But word of love came never.
The men that come are sure to go,
And some take leave for ever.

I strive by many cunning plots
  Their feelings to discover,
And sometimes sweet forget-me-nots
  Present to backward lover.
But though with costly gems from far
  I deck my shining tresses,
And though I sing of love and war,
  And sport becoming dresses,
Yet all in vain this idle show!
  I'll gain their favour never,
For men may come and men may go,
  But I must stick for ever."

In the 'Sixties Mr Brownlow North was much in evidence in Banff and Moray, in the latter of which counties he had taken up his permanent residence. Many will remember that he was a man of strong individuality, wide and unusually varied experiences of life, and of very considerable oratorical power. His career had commenced with a very plentiful sowing of wild oats of all kinds, and ended in the perfervid efforts of an eloquent evangelist. As might be expected, widely divergent opinions were held as to his real character as a member of society. Many, on possibly good grounds, doubted, many others had absolute faith in, the genuineness of his conversion and renunciation of all things worldly. In a Banffshire manse where I was passing the night, the subject turned up

and was variously dealt with. Having an imperfect knowledge of his past life, I asked how long he had been a saint, to which the mistress of the manse, an exceedingly shrewd old lady, who spoke Scotch without a savour of vulgarity, replied with characteristic pawky humour, "Nae sae lang's he's been a sinner, ony way."

It is not often that a minister is annoyed at seeing members of his congregation present in church, and it is still rarer to find him openly giving expression to that feeling. It has been my experience once, but only once, to be told by a minister that he was sorry to see me in church. A good many years ago I happened to meet the minister of a church in the North of Scotland immediately after service, when he said, "There were two people in church to-day whom I could have wished absent."

"Who were they?" I asked.

"The sheriff and yourself," he replied.

"Why?"

"Oh, you know quite well."

"Is it because of the sermon?"

"Yes; but you will admit that I managed it very well."

The explanation is that after reading the text he said, "An eminent divine in dealing with this

subject commenced by saying that——" and then followed the whole of a sermon by Robertson of Brighton. He thought, which was really the case, that the sheriff and I would detect the subterfuge, but he had shielded himself from a charge of plagiarism by extending what seemed to be only a short quotation into a complete sermon.

I have three times heard Spurgeon preach, and on each occasion was much struck by the effective homeliness of his illustrations, the directness of his appeals, and his marvellous sympathetic power. His manifest earnestness of purpose bore even the severe strain of his irrepressible sense of humour. The first sermon had for its object wiping off the debt contracted by a Baptist congregation in repairing and enlarging a church. In stating the object of his visit, he said: "I am often asked to preach for purposes similar to this, and am at a loss to account for some congregations getting into difficulties. I cannot decide whether it is owing to their launching their ship in too shallow water, or to their taking on board too much cargo, but I rather think it is due to too shallow water, and that surely ought not to be the case with Baptists."

In the course of his second sermon he referred

to the martyrs of old, to their tenacity of purpose, the persecutions to which they were subjected, the tortures they endured, and their fearlessness of death, ending with, "Yes, there were giants in those days. We have fallen on degenerate times. These martyrs went to the stake and were burned. Catch any doctors of divinity of to-day going to the stake and being burned! No, they won't burn." Then after an effective pause, "But I daresay I am mistaken. They would burn. Many of them, at any rate, are dry enough to burn."

On the third occasion when I heard him preach he complained of the spirit in which many people came to church. "They come," he said, "not to profit by what is good in the sermon, but to criticise and find fault. How different from Ruth when she went to glean in the corn-field! When she had gathered as much as she could carry, she, like a wise woman, plucked off the ears and carried them home, leaving the straw behind her. Quite right, Ruth! Sensible Ruth! I wish people of the present day would follow your example. They don't; they come to church in an irreligious fault-finding spirit, not in search of the nutritious ears, but of the worthless stubble and straw, which alone they carry away with

them. Well, well, there are people who like it; every man to his taste, and much good may it do them."

I knew an old maiden lady in Banffshire, of strong character, and given to correspondingly vigorous expression of opinion when occasion required, who would in one respect at least have been pleased with Mr Spurgeon. On returning from church, where a very weak sermon had been preached by a young nervous clergyman, she was asked what she thought of him. "Oh," she replied, "I like to see a man tak' either the ae side or the ither, but yon cratur' he just whispered his prayers in the lug of the Lord as if he was feared the deevil wud hear him."

Another old lady of similar type had spoken of an acquaintance as being a proud peacock. This came to the ears of the lady so described, who soon after meeting the old lady who had so defamed her, asked if it was true, and got for answer, "Weel, it's waur to tell a lee than say an impudent thing, and it's true. I did ca' ye a peacock."

Outspoken old ladies like this are not rare. A man of very questionable honesty met at a supper-party an old maiden lady whom he disliked and missed no opportunity of irritating.

She had no personal charms, but a sharp faculty for retort. When it came to his turn to propose a toast, he said with a significant gesture in the direction of the old lady, "I give you 'Honest men and bonnie lasses,'" to which she rejoined, "You and me can drink that toast and no be blamed for selfishness or self-conceit, for it has naething to do with either you or me."

I attended service one day in a church on Deeside where, as not unusual in country districts, the collection is taken in "ladles"—little wooden boxes at the end of a long handle, pushed up and down the pews. Deft manipulation of these primitive machines is somewhat difficult. On this occasion the elder was not very successful. At dinner in the manse I adverted to Robert's want of dexterity. The minister replied that he had greatly improved on his first attempt, when he was mercilessly chaffed about his clumsiness as compared with the performance of another elder who had been appointed at the same time. Smarting under the chaff he replied, "Deil thank him for doing better than me. He has been practeesin' for a fortnight with a turnip on the end of a hayfork up and down the trevisses in the stable." A treviss is the partition separating one stall from another.

About the same time I heard the word "treviss" in a different connection. On the day of the Braemar gathering I accepted an invitation to dinner in the hotel. The party was a large one, and among the guests were a good many farmers. One of them, seated opposite to me, after doing ample justice to boiled mutton and beefsteak-pie, proceeded to help himself to apple-tart before his meat-plate was removed. I suggested that the waiter would soon be round to give him a fresh cover, to which he replied, "Oh, I tak a' my meat aff ae plate; there's nae trevisses in my stomach."

CHAPTER XXI.

PROFESSOR BLACKIE — HIS VERSATILITY, VITALITY, AND DISREGARD OF CONVENTION — DINNERS AT BLACKIE'S AND CALDERWOOD'S — THE HELLENIC CLUB PRESENTATION ON HIS EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY—HIS INGENUOUSNESS—MASSON — MACLAGAN — CHRISTISON — NORMAN MACLEOD — HIS BREADTH, FORCE, HUMANITY, AND HUMOUR—THE LATE LORD INVERCLYDE.

DURING the three years, 1867 to 1870, when I was joint classical examiner for degrees in Edinburgh University, and from 1888 to 1895 as a member of the Hellenic Society, of which Professor Blackie was president, I saw a great deal of him both officially and socially. Like all who came into contact with him, I was struck by his marvellous versatility and vitality, his large-hearted tolerance, his wide sympathy, his alertness in everything literary, and his *præfervidum ingenium* in the advocacy of all that he believed true and right. Combined, however, with these high qualities one could not fail to observe a complete disregard of convention, a

youthful and almost boyish—may I say?—rowdyism, which detracted somewhat from dignity of bearing, and an eccentricity which sometimes bordered closely on buffoonery, perhaps originally assumed, but ultimately natural. Those who knew him best and liked him most will readily admit there was a considerable amount of vanity in his composition, but it was inoffensive and by no means aggressive. Nor was this feature in his character difficult to be accounted for. Welcomed wherever he went, a most popular platform speaker, enjoying the friendship of men eminent in almost every field of literature, receiving constant proofs that he was regarded as no ordinary man, it is not matter for wonder that he should come to think of himself as others thought of him. How few men in such circumstances could have escaped being vain? in how many would not the vanity have been offensive? In him it was not.

For a man with strong opinions on most subjects, he was singularly free from malice and pettiness in his intercourse with those who differed from him. This transparent good-nature and sweetness of temper enabled him to make, without offence, personal remarks on which men of different type could not have ventured, or which,

if made, would have been sharply resented. At a dinner-party in his own house Sir Lyon (afterwards Lord) Playfair, Professor Calderwood, and myself were seated on his right hand. As the decanters went round Professor Calderwood, who was a consistent but not at all an aggressive abstainer, passed them on without helping himself. Sir Lyon seeing this asked him if he would not take a glass of wine. "No," said Blackie, taking the reply out of his mouth, "he does not take wine himself, but," addressing Calderwood, "you must not refuse it to your friends." This remark was prospective, because next night we were to dine with Calderwood, who was promoter of degrees that year. Next night Blackie reached Calderwood's house immediately before me. After disposing of his hat and plaid he turned round, and, seeing me, remembered the conversation of the previous night, and, clasping me in his arms, sang out in tones that rang through the house, "Nunc est bibendum, nunc est potandum!" and on entering the drawing-room rapturously embraced Sir Alexander Grant and repeated the exclamation.

As to the strain of vanity observable in him, I remember meeting him one day on a short railway journey almost immediately after Mr

Gladstone's famous speech in connection with Mr Bradlaugh's admission to Parliament. I remarked that it was a great feat for a man of Gladstone's age to make such a long and able speech. "Oh," he replied, "age has nothing to do with it. The part of a man that's strongest lasts longest: if the muscles are strongest, they last longest; if the brain is strongest, it lasts longest. I could not climb Ben Nevis as nimbly as I could thirty years ago, but my head is as clear as ever it was, and I could speak for an hour and a half or more without any feeling of fatigue." To this I replied half seriously, half in joke, "Ah, yes! but there are not many Gladstones and Blackies in the world." It was not unnatural to expect him to deprecate being compared with such a giant as Gladstone. He did not, but complacently accepted, as legitimate and serious, a comparison from one point of view quite legitimate, but not more than half serious.

A good example of the ever-varying moods of the "old man eloquent," and of his almost boyish vitality combined, was given at a meeting of the Hellenic Club, when he was presented with a silver cup by the members as a memorial of his eightieth birthday. Care was taken that he should have no knowledge of the proposed pres-

entation, which was made with great taste and feeling by Mr Charles Robertson, one of the oldest members. The surprise and pleasure were almost overwhelming to the old man. For a few moments, under strong feeling, his wonted fluency failed him, but glancing round the meeting, which was an unusually full one, and catching the sympathetic looks of friends who had sat under his presidency for many years, he pulled himself together, and expressed his thanks in a speech which, permeated throughout with deep feeling and the true ring of sincerity, for felicitous phrase, genial warmth of sentiment for old friends, sound counsel to the younger members, and a catholic kindliness for all, was absolutely perfect. That speech will be remembered by all who heard it. And yet that cultured old man, not very many minutes after he sat down, on being asked to sing a song, chose one of his own composition about Jenny Geddes and the cutty stool, and would have been miserable if he had not had at hand, in the absence of a cutty stool, a cane chair to fling for dramatic effect at the head of the offending dean. It occurred to me that in one sense, and not an entirely unfavourable one, it was true that there were not many Gladstones and Blackies in the world.

At a meeting of the club he gave a striking proof of ingenuousness and an open mind. The meaning of *βαθύκολπος*, a Homeric epithet descriptive of Trojan ladies, was being discussed. Blackie at first supported a view held by many scholars, and adopted by himself in his published translation; but one of the members propounded another, and defended it so successfully that Blackie gave in, and admitted that his own translation was inferior, if not altogether wrong. Men of eighty years of age seldom change their opinions on questions of scholarship about which their minds have been long made up, and which have been published.

A few nights after the dinner at Professor Blackie's to which I have referred, I dined with Professor Masson, and passed a most enjoyable evening. There were about a dozen professors, and among them Blackie, Maclagan, and Christison. The conversation was excellent, our host, with characteristic fulness and accuracy, effectively taking his share. The other three professors already named sang remarkably well, Sir Douglas giving "Glen Tilt" and imitations of Mario. Sir Robert, whom I had thought a type of quiet and almost reserved dignity, unbent like a boy, and joined in a comic duet with

all the heart and spirit of one of his youngest students. Masson alone is still with us, with, I am glad to say, when I last saw him, undiminished energy and interest in what has been his lifework.

On the many occasions when I visited Glasgow I scarcely ever failed to call upon and keep alive my acquaintance with the great Norman Macleod of the Barony Church. Few of those who knew him intimately will think the epithet "great" misapplied. I do not think it possible for any one to have come into close contact with him without feeling that, in respect of intellectual and moral force, breadth of sympathy, courage, and humanity, he was really a great man. How quickly and pleasantly an hour's "twa-handed crack" passed with him in his study, or, as he called it, his "den," and how sorry one felt when it came to an end. He had led a rich life in contact with all sorts and conditions of men, and had turned his great powers of observation and analysis of character to the best account. His world was a big one, and he had sounded all its depths and shoals with rare insight and a keen sense of humour. Nothing could be more interesting than his account of his experiences in some of his earlier charges, which

he narrated with a drollery and graphic power all his own, and which cannot be communicated to paper.

One day the subject was a visit to the family of a Chartist given over to socialism, tippling, and general improvidence, who never had two sixpences to rub on each other, who insisted on the integrity of the "seven points" and a periodical redistribution of this world's goods; and when it was shown that revolution, national bankruptcy, and probably ruin to himself would follow if his plan were carried out, replied (after a deliberative pinch of snuff) with the courage of a hero and a sounding slap on his thigh, "Dod, Mr Macleod, I'll risk it!" On another day it was to a Cameronian family, in which the head of the house was an old and very deaf woman, who, in prospect of the minister's visit, had invited the attendance of half-a-dozen neighbours of the same strict sect as herself as a sort of spiritual body-guard against the Erastian invasion. There they sat, each as grim and inexorable as Rhadamanthus, every face the embodiment of dogmas of the hardest kind, and no one shook hands with him by way of welcome till, through a long ear-trumpet, he had "run owre the fundamentals" in the ear of the old woman, and showed himself

sound on "justification by faith" and "effectual calling."

I have always regretted being unable to accept a proposal he made that I should accompany him to the studio of Sir Daniel Macnee, and hear him tell one of his marvellous stories. I had unfortunately an engagement which prevented me on that occasion. It was the only opportunity I ever had.

On another of my visits to Glasgow I met at a dinner-party in the university the late Lord Inverclyde, who had lived a life in close association with men of mark in a wide and varied field, and had kept eye and ear open for incidents, humorous and other, worthy of note and reproduction. His *répertoire* was large, and he handled it with admirable tact and dramatic effect. Among other stories he told was one, a good deal of the charm of which depends on the American quality of unexpectedness in the *dénoûment*. The following is, to the best of my recollection, a fairly correct version:—

A party of gentlemen after dinner were sitting over their walnuts and wine, when something led one to hazard the remark that there was probably not a person present who had not been at least once in his life tipsy or near it. All admitted the

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soft impeachment. It was then proposed, as likely to be amusing, that each in turn should relate his experience on the occasion of his first departure from strict sobriety. As no one was willing to begin, it was decided to draw lots as to who should take the lead. This was done, and the lot fell to an English clergyman, who thus began:—

"I had just been a year married after getting a nice country living, when I was asked to marry a couple of my parishioners. At a supper-party on the evening of the marriage, as I had performed the ceremony, and knew the relations of both bride and bridegroom, I was courteously challenged a good many times in the course of the evening by one or another of the guests holding up his glass to give him the pleasure of drinking a glass of wine with me. To refuse was, of course, impossible, but I had not the slightest intention of going beyond the strictest limits of moderation. Now, whether it was that I had unconsciously taken more than I intended, or had foolishly mixed my wines, I almost suddenly had a strange sensation in my head, and said to myself, 'Good heavens! this is intoxication. I shall take no more,' and I didn't. I thought I should be all right when I got to the open air,

but, on the contrary, I got very much worse—so much worse that I could not venture to face my young wife. I accordingly walked about for an hour or perhaps two, till I felt so much better that I thought I might go home. I was unsuccessful in several attempts to get the key into the keyhole. Succeeding at last, I turned the bolt and closed the door as noiselessly as possible, and hung up my greatcoat in the lobby. And now to get upstairs. Steadying myself for the effort, I began the ascent carefully and quietly, hoping to get into bed without awaking my wife, for though I was better I was not quite well. I had only got half-way up when, to my horror, I saw light shining below the bedroom door. My wife was evidently reading in bed, awaiting my return. There was nothing for it now but facing the difficulty boldly. On opening the bedroom door I found, to my delight, that she was sound asleep. She had been reading, and had not blown out the candle. I began to undress as quickly and quietly as I could, and was just about to blow out the candle when a voice reached my ears that I shall never forget as long as I live, 'John! John! surely you are not going to bed with your hat on.'"

A good many years afterwards I met Lord

Inverclyde at a dinner-party, and reminding him of the story, asked him to repeat it. He declined, saying that he had made up his mind never to tell it again. The reason he gave was that on one occasion when he was telling it at a dinner-party, and had got to the point where the clergyman was undressing before blowing out the candle, the hostess, evidently fearing that he was getting on to dangerous ground, made a signal to the lady at the other end of the table and said, "Now, ladies, shall we go to the drawing-room?"

CHAPTER XXII.

INFANT-TEACHING MUCH IMPROVED—WHEN SHOULD IT BEGIN—"D—N THE CAT!"—GREAT IMPROVEMENT IN READING-BOOKS—READING THE MOST VALUABLE SCHOOL PRODUCT—CORPORAL PUNISHMENT—DR MELVIN—LEATHER—THOMAS FRASER OF GOLSPIE—AN EQUESTRIAN INCIDENT.

In my pretty long retrospect of school work and school appliances I know no respect in which there are greater changes and improvements than in infant-class teaching. Till within comparatively recent years the school-life of infants was absolutely unrelieved by anything in the shape of amusement or healthy admixture of work and play. The alphabet, and nothing but the alphabet, was their daily food for a month or six weeks, or even longer. When the lesson was over, they had to go to their seats, and either sit quiet or make a disturbance, according to the teacher's idea of discipline. Drill or the various manual exercises that now brighten the child's life were not thought of, and, if they had been thought of, would have

been considered a sheer and silly waste of valuable time. In this respect there has been a marvellous and beneficent change, especially in large town schools, and also, though to a smaller extent, in country schools, where the teachers for fertility of resource in devising plans combining amusement and instruction deserve the highest praise.

On my visit in 1884, at the request of the Department, to schools in London, Cambridge, and Manchester, I was much struck by the superiority of the infant schools as compared with those in Scotland. In the management there was more repose of manner and gentleness on the part of the teacher, and greater refinement and politeness on that of the pupil, than with us. This was due partly to a pretty general prejudice in Scotland at that time against children being sent to school before six or seven years of age, and partly to the infant grants in England being graded according to merit, while in Scotland there was one uniform grant on the simple condition that the infants were taught "suitably to their age." There was therefore no encouragement for the development of new and superior methods. The prejudice against infant-training has to a large extent broken down since the introduction, more

or less fully, of Kindergarten methods, and a Scottish infant school now need not fear comparison with its English rival. There are, however, a good many parents whose opinions are still divided as to the most suitable education for young children, and the age at which it should commence. Some years ago the subject turned up in the course of a conversation I had with a well-known lawyer. He told me that he once held very strongly that no child under six years of age should break educational ground in anything demanding fixed attention or effort of any kind; that the mind should be left to the free play of spontaneous observation of what was said and done around him. He said, however, that he had changed his mind from what he had observed in dealing with his only boy. He had carried out his theory rigidly till his son was six. Being an only child the boy was almost constantly with his parents, and from listening to their conversation his general intelligence was well developed. "As soon as he was six," said his father, "we began to teach him the alphabet. This he found most distasteful, just because he was so intelligent. He knew all about so many interesting things, that to grind up the names of letters seemed cruel and unmeaning trifling. I am quite sure," he

continued, "that if he had begun it at four years of age, when his intelligence was much less developed, he would have taken kindly to his letters. We persevered, however, with him till he knew them all, and got as far as to know little words—'lo, we go,' 'we do so,' &c. One day he was reading the lesson, 'A cat sat on a mat, the cat saw a rat, the cat ran at the rat, the fat cat' —he then looked up in my face full of disgust, threw the book into the corner, saying, 'Oh, d—n the cat!'" It was evident that the language he had heard at his father's table was not only intelligent but forcible.

What a change and improvement in the character of reading-books for school purposes within the last forty years. Before 1860 there were a few good lesson-books—so good that I am not sure they have yet been surpassed from the point of view of judicious selection of literary extracts, such as those compiled by Dr Maculloch—but they were not in very general use, and scarcely at all in small schools in country districts. After the penny book and "ladder"—both absolutely uninteresting—were mastered, a child was introduced to the New Testament, which did duty for what are now Third and Fourth Standard readers, the Old Testament doing the same for

the Fifth and Sixth Standards. Removal from the Testament to the Bible class was as distinct and definite promotion as removal from the Fourth to the Fifth or Sixth Standard. "I'm in the Testament now," a boy from one school would say, and another from a different school would say, "Ah, but I'm in the Bible," as a proof of superior attainments. It is difficult to say what effect on the moral and religious nature of the child this daily and secular use of the Scriptures as lesson-books may have had, but it is most improbable that greater reverence for them was one of the results. It is quite certain that it did not give interest to the reading-lesson.

May we not trace to this the answer of the retired gamekeeper who, when asked by his minister if he read much, now that he was laid aside from work, replied that he was very fond of reading, and read everything that he could put his hands on. When the minister rejoined, "I hope, Robert, you read your Bible too?" "Oh ay," he said, "I read my Bible whiles; there's some fine interesting stories in the Bible, but, man, it has nae chance wi' 'Wilson's Tales of the Borders.'"

Dames' schools, which were once common in

country districts, and, in their own simple way, did useful work, have almost ceased to exist. It is told of one of them that when a little girl, in reading a portion of the Old Testament which bristled with proper names of great difficulty, came to a dead stop, the old mistress, probably herself puzzled, said to her, "Jeannie, just read ye straucht on. Dinna mind hoo ye misca' them, they're a' deid."

I have always considered the consciousness of acquired power through being able to read with ease and understanding as by far the most valuable of school products for the average pupil. To read with expression and elocutionary effect is desirable, but confessedly difficult, unless the teacher has a strong leaning in that direction. But even when the effort falls short of this added excellence, it cannot, I think, be doubted that when the mechanical difficulty is completely overcome, and an appreciative taste for reading during respite from labour is created, the working man is put in possession of the most effective instrument for sweetening his life, and raising himself almost unconsciously to a higher level. Many intelligent working men have not very frequent occasion for writing, many more have little occasion for arithmetic, except for the

simple head calculations connected with their wages and weekly expenditure; but if the working man is not to stagnate, and expose himself to the dangers that usually accompany stagnation in the moral as in the material world, he must read, and read as regularly as he can. It must not be thought that I undervalue writing and arithmetic, or that I think lower attainments than are demanded would be satisfactory in a national system of education. The estimate of the three branches is a comparative one. Writing and arithmetic are mainly, if not entirely, educational forces. Reading is an educational, but still more a moral force.

Here a protest against certain kinds of reading is not out of place. There are some that are neither morally nor intellectually good. I have a strong conviction that the "penny dreadfuls," and some of even the higher-priced periodicals (containing little else than sensational and impossible adventures) which are issued weekly or monthly from the press, can scarcely fail to create an appetite for exciting and highly-spiced reading to which literature of a higher, more useful, and, except to a diseased taste, intrinsically more interesting kind will appeal in vain. The boy or girl who between the ages of sixteen

and twenty has gone through a course of this sensational rubbish, will be with difficulty brought back to a state of mind which can enjoy the beauty, pathos, and truthfulness of such writers as Scott, Thackeray, and Dickens. The result must be a waste of valuable time and a debauching of literary taste.

The question of corporal punishment in the maintenance of discipline is by no means a simple one. I have only once or twice seen the tawse used during the annual inspection, but at visits without notice, in passing from room to room, I have both seen and heard it vigorously administered by both sexes in the staff of juvenile departments. On every occasion when it was seen that I observed it, the instrument was immediately huddled out of sight, as if the teacher had a feeling that everything was not quite right. That it can be entirely dispensed with is, I think, impossible; that it is much more common than it ought to be, and is resorted to as being the most expeditious, and, to the teacher, the least troublesome exercise of discipline, is, I am satisfied, quite certain. It is often due not so much to the pupil being naughty as to the teacher being injudicious. It should not be much needed in roomy, well-ventilated schools, where the pupils are physically

comfortable. It should be used only for moral offences, such as falsehood, cheating, and disobedience, and then only when other means have been tried and failed, and it is beyond doubt that the teacher is the best disciplinarian who punishes least. In no school where the teacher takes the trouble to make careful observation of character, moral and mental, ought corporal punishment to be anything but a matter of rare occurrence. Sympathy with inferior mental power in one class of pupil, and with nervousness in another, would enormously diminish the number of cases in which physical pain is regarded as a corrective. It is simply cruel and permanently injurious to punish for shortcomings resulting from dulness or nervousness.

A very noteworthy example of excellent discipline is told of a famous Aberdeen teacher, Dr Melvin. He is said to have scarcely ever had recourse to corporal punishment. On one very serious occasion he was compelled to depart from his almost invariable rule. He called up the offender and said, "James, I'm going to punish you, and you must be a very bad boy, and have done something very wrong, for I have not punished a boy for seven years. But I must punish

you to-day, and very sorry I am to be compelled to do so." After a few more remarks, firm but kindly, about the nature of the offence, he took his keys from his pocket, opened the desk, and took out the tawse that had been lying with the dust of seven years upon it, and said, "James, hold out your hand." James did so, and the Doctor, grasping the instrument of torture in his right hand, and raising it aloft, brought it down very very slowly, and with the lightness of a feather touched James's palm. "Now, James, go to your seat." James went, laid his head on the desk, and cried as if his heart would break. He had not been hardened by the daily contemplation of flogging, and he felt there was contamination in the very touch of the tawse. Perhaps none but a strong man could rise to this height of discipline, but weaker men might take it as an example, and probably the strength would come. Dr Melvin was at any rate infinitely nearer the ideal of discipline than a teacher who once gave in my presence an object-lesson on leather. He illustrated its use in the manufacture of boots, bags, belts, &c., and pressed for still other examples. After running the class dry, while still one use was wanting, he

turned to his desk, on which the tawse was lying, and with a roguish smile held it up before the class. I thought it a mistake to treat in this would-be funny fashion an article which it was desirable to regard, I do not say with reverence, but certainly not with familiarity; and that it would have been better either to omit his own special illustration of the use of leather, or, if mentioned, not to have made it a subject of more than questionable humour.

Non omnes omnia possumus. This short disquisition on discipline leads me to speak of another teacher scarcely less famous than Dr Melvin, though in a somewhat narrower sphere, —like him in accuracy of scholarship and untiring devotion to duty, as unlike as possible in his method of discipline, — Thomas Fraser, parish schoolmaster of Golspie. Revered as his memory is in the two parishes, Rogart and Golspie, in which he spent the greatest part of his laborious life, and on whose school walls affectionate memorial tablets have lately been placed by admiring pupils, the sternness and severity of his discipline bulk largely in the estimate formed of him even by those who have the greatest admiration for his work and character.

His abundant—it is not unfair to say his super-abundant — use of the tawse has not blinded them to his inflexible justice, his inspiring influence, his high moral tone, his manly independence of character, and his whole-hearted appreciation of good work well done. His pupils are spread all over the world, many of them doing high and responsible work. I know no man who more fully, perhaps none who so fully, carried out John Knox's idea of a school in every parish in which education was carried to such a height as enabled a boy to go straight from the school to the university. I have found in Mr Fraser's school attainments in classics and mathematics of which any grammar-school would have been proud.

I chanced to be in Golspie last autumn on a visit to an old and valued friend, Dr Joass, the minister of the parish, when the tablet there was unveiled, the Duke of Sutherland occupying the chair. An appreciative and discriminating account of Mr Fraser's career was given by Mr Gray, a former pupil and now an eminent lawyer in London. I am tempted to give a short extract from his speech: "Let us leave, then, 'his few faults shut up like dead flowerets,'

for his memory is very dear and delightful to us his pupils, as that of the ablest and best of masters, whose enthusiasm in teaching stimulated us to learn and to love learning all our days, not only as a means of livelihood but of life; whom we feared as we entered, but learnt to love as we passed through this school, and to whom after we had left it we ever felt the deepest sense of gratitude."

The lines—

> "When all is over on the tomb is seen
> Not what he was, but what he should have been,"

are not true of Mr Fraser. The tablet and Mr Gray's speech furnish a plain unvarnished record.

This visit to Golspie recalls an incident of a former one many years ago, when my travelling was done on horseback. I was spending a week-end at the manse. Dr Joass's servant, thinking my mare required a little exercise, got on her back with this laudable object in view. The mare, evidently regarding this as an unwarranted liberty, promptly dislodged him. The lad naturally did not publish his ignominious though harmless downfall. It came out, however, a

few days after, and Dr Joass sent me the subjoined spirited sketch, which I thought worthy of preservation. He wrote, "I have just been informed that your mare 'dashed my buttons' to the ground, and was making tracks for the grass-parks at Aberdeen, when she was happily caught ere she had gone many yards."

Recent deposit, of mare-ine origin. "Human" remains.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NOT TO BE IMPOSED UPON — PRAYING FOR QUEEN CAROLINE — ROUNDS OF TOASTS — HUMOROUS CERTIFICATES — A NATHANIEL—"YON"—WATTIE DUNLOP—ADVICE BASED ON BIBLICAL EXAMPLE—PROVIDENCE AND LIMITED LIABILITY —"A DIVINITY THAT SHAPES OUR ENDS."

THERE are few Scottish ministers of whom so many stories of pawky humour are told as of Mr Leslie, a former minister of Lhanbryde, in Morayshire. He was a man of comfortable means, of genial but strictly decorous hospitality, and had a wide circle of friends. He was very proud of his skill in brewing toddy suited to the general taste. In his time toddy was made by the host for all his guests in a punch-bowl. Three of his friends, who knew of the pride he had in his skill in the operation, were asked to dine with him, and conspired to deal him the "most unkindest cut of all" on this tender point. After compounding the mixture with his usual care he ladled out a glass for trial pre-

liminary to real business, and passed it to Mr A, saying, "What do you think of that?"

"It is very nice, but I think it might perhaps stand another bit of sugar."

Taken aback at this he said to Mr B, "What do you think?"

"It is quite sweet enough, but it strikes me as just a shade strong; a little more water would improve it."

Still more puzzled, he asked Mr C for his opinion, who said that it was excellent, but slightly weak and might be none the worse of just a little more whisky. At his wits' end he rang the bell, and asked the servant to send up John the beadle, on whose judgment he knew he could rely. Filling a glass for John, he asked what he thought of it. "Oh, sir, it's just first rate."

"Very well, John, take this bowl down to the kitchen. Your friends and you will be able to finish it, and send up some coffee to these lads."

While Mr Leslie disliked "rounds of toasts" —that is, the custom of accompanying every glass by a toast or sentiment, a custom that at last became odious and has now fallen into disuse—he retained in his kindly old-fashioned way a fringe of the now forgotten habit. After the

ladies had retired three toasts were proposed—(1) *an angel*, (2) a *friend*, and (3) a *sentiment*, after which they joined the ladies. The subjects of the two first were a lady and gentleman held in high estimation by the company. The *sentiment* was something epigrammatic, such as, "May the evening's enjoyment bear the morning's reflections." In literary and political circles at the time when rounds of toasts were the fashion the sentiment might, however, take different colours, political or cynical, as when Charles Lamb, annoyed by some of his witticisms being drowned by the noisy romping of the children in the nursery adjoining the dining-room, proposed, with a significant glance in the direction of the nursery, "the memory of the *good* King Herod."

There were many other occasions on which Mr Leslie showed that he had a rich vein of humour. Mr W., a co-presbyter of his, arraigned him before the presbytery for praying for Queen Caroline. He pleaded guilty to the charge, and by way of defence said, "I did pray for her, and if she is as bad as ye make her she'll be nane the waur o' my prayers."

An Aberdeen minister, when called to account by Dr F. on the same charge, defended himself

in a less delicate but scarcely less humorous and effective way. "I did pray for Queen Caroline, and I'll pray for her again, and I'll pray for the debased and the vile, for thieves and murderers, for evil-doers of every kind, and I'll pray for Dr F."

Mr Leslie was famous for his certificates, which often proved a source of substantial emolument to the possessors, to whom people with a mixture of charity and curiosity in their composition freely gave a few coppers for a perusal of them. The following was one such:—

"To all his Majesty's loving subjects who can feel for a fellow-sinner in distress, I beg to certify that the bearer, W. J., is the son of my bellman, a man well known for his honest poverty and excessive indolence. The son has inherited a full share of the father's poverty with a double portion of his improvidence. I cannot say that he has many active virtues to boast of, but he is not altogether unmindful of Scriptural injunctions, having striven with no small success 'to replenish the earth,' though he has done but little 'to subdue' the same. It was his misfortune to lose his cow lately from too little care and too much bere-chaff, and that walking

skeleton, which he called his horse, having ceased to 'hear the oppressor's voice, or dread the tyrant's rod,' the poor man has now no means of repairing his loss but the skins of the defuncts and the generosity of a benevolent public, whom he expects to be stimulated to great liberality by this testimonial from theirs, with respect, &c., WILL. LESLIE.

"LHANBRYDE GLEBE, *22nd Dec.* 1829."

The following I got from a friend who was at one time schoolmaster of Lhanbryde, and, before he died, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. I reproduce it, to the best of my recollection, *verbatim*. Being parish schoolmaster, he was also, as was then customary, session clerk, one of whose duties is to give certificates of church membership to persons removing from one parish to another. A request for such a certificate was made to him almost immediately after his appointment to the office. Not knowing the precise form the certificate should take, he consulted Mr Leslie, who asked what sort of person the applicant was, and was told that he seemed a very respectable man.

"What," said Mr Leslie, "does he say about himself?"

"He says that he has been a farm-servant with Mr R. for the past year."

"Ay, ay," meditatively; "what else does he say?"

"That he was a communicant in our church on the last Sacrament Sunday."

"Ay, ay; give me a sheet of paper."

Having got it he wrote out a certificate, signed, and passed it to the session clerk, who countersigned without reading it till he had left the room, when he found the contents were:—

"This is to certify that Robert W. has been, according to his own account, a farm-servant with Mr R. for the past year; that he was, according to the same account, a communicant in our church on the last occasion; that he is, so far as we know, a decent enough sort of person, and not distinguished for any heinous crime beyond the rest of the parish."

The certificate is perhaps noteworthy from its quizzically expressing *in gremio* the general scope of such documents.

To a girl who had been accused of stealing £30, and asked him for a certificate of character, he gave the following:—

"To all whom this may or may not concern, it is hereby certified that in my estimation Jane

Simpson is a very good, clean, and honest lass, meriting the favourable regards and protection of any of the elect among whom Providence may appoint her lot, the cause of this, my estimation of her, being that she is often rather a casual inmate for several days, and occasionally for weeks together at a time, than a permanent residentress. And although she never had the means of stealing £30 from me, as such an amount is very rarely allowed to light with me, yet I have often seen clothes belonging to each and all of the family, servants' chests left open, and silver spoons left carelessly on the kitchen-dresser and otherwise ill laid up, with many other little matters, tempting to any one of dishonest habits, entirely in her power had she been thievishly inclined. But I know that nothing has been missed by any of the servants or others at any time since she first began to be serviceable amongst us.

"Given by me at Lhanbryde Manse the 4th December 1826, by the testimony of my signature, WILL. LESLIE.

("The accuser of the girl's honesty, it was generally believed, had not such a sum lying beside him whereof to be robbed.")

A good story is told of the Rev. Mr Bower of Maryculter, who died a good many years ago. He was a most faithful parish minister, universally respected, and a guileless Nathanael. On being appointed to a country parish he is said to have had serious doubts as to whether milking a cow on Sunday was a work of either necessity or mercy. One day Dr Scott, Professor of Moral Philosophy in Aberdeen, was called upon by a gentleman whom the servant took for Mr Bower. The Professor was not at home. When he came in his servant told him that Mr Bower had called. He asked if Mr Bower had left any message, and was told that he had not. A few days afterwards the same gentleman called a second time. The Professor was again out, and, asking if Mr Bower had left no message, the servant said he had not. Surprised at this, he said, "Did he not say anything at all."

"Yes, sir, he said something."

"What did he say?"

"Well, sir, I wud raythe not tell you."

"Nonsense! What did Mr Bower say?"

"Well, I *wud* raythe not say it of a minister."

The Professor, knowing that Mr Bower would say nothing wrong, insisted on being told what

he said, to which the maid replied, "Well, sir, if ye *wull* hear it, he just said 'Damn it!' and turned on his heel and gaed awa'."

Dr Scott knew there was some mistake and said, "Are you quite sure Mr Bower said that?"

"Yes, sir, he did say that, and I didna want to tell you, but ye wud mak me."

"But are you sure it was Mr Bower?"

"Deed ay; it was Mr Bower?"

He then asked her to describe his dress and appearance, and found from the description that it was not Mr Bower, but Lord A—b—t, who somewhat resembled the worthy minister in size and build, and was in the habit of sometimes using strong language. The idea of Mr Bower being accused of swearing furnished a subject for a practical joke too good to be resisted. Professor Scott accordingly narrated the incident to one of Mr Bower's co-presbyters, who at the first presbytery meeting thereafter rose with a perfectly grave face and said he had a most serious charge to bring against Mr Bower, one of his oldest and dearest friends, the father of the presbytery, a man who had hitherto led a singularly blameless life, and whose intimacy he had enjoyed for upwards of thirty years. He said he was most unwilling and sorely grieved to bring

such a charge against an old friend, but regard for his cloth left him no alternative. He then gave a circumstantial account of the incident above described. Poor Mr Bower was dreadfully taken aback, and for some time was speechless. He felt, however, that he must make some reply, which he did in substantially the following terms: "Mr Moderator and brethren, I know that Mr D. is a friend of mine, and I am a friend of his. We have been friends for thirty years, and I well believe that he would say nothing against me that he did not believe to be true; but either he has lost his judgment or I have lost mine, for I don't believe I ever said these words." He then sat down fairly overcome. The matter was then explained, and the joke was enjoyed as much by himself as by his friends. The meeting over, his friend and he were driving home together in a two-wheeled gig when one of the wheels collided with a large stone and they were almost upset, and ran the risk of being thrown into the Dee. Mr Bower, turning to his friend, said, "I'm thinking if it had been Lord A—b—t he would have said *yon*."

After I had finished the examination of an excellent school taught by a man of great practical ability and sound scholarship, he told me

that as he was approaching seventy years of age he thought of retiring. I said I hoped the board would give him a good retiring allowance, which he had well earned. He replied that he did not know what to expect, but he hoped, if the board should think of dealing with him as the congregation of a Secession church in Dumfriesshire proposed to deal with their minister, who after long and faithful service had become unfit for duty, that some *deus ex machina* would come to the rescue, as the well-known Rev. Walter Dunlop had done on that occasion. I asked him for an explanation, which he gave pretty much in the following terms. He said that he came originally from the south of Scotland, and was present at the meeting at which the question of the retirement of the old minister was discussed. It was at the time when what is known in ecclesiastical circles as the Voluntary controversy was raging upwards of fifty years ago all over Scotland, and especially in the south, that the question arose. I forget of what elements the meeting was composed. It was probably a presbytery meeting. There were at any rate Secession ministers present, and among them one of the most zealous and able advocates of the Voluntary principle, who arose and, dealing with the

question as to whether there should be a fixed retiring allowance, or whether the old man should be left to the goodwill and attachment of the congregation whom he had served so long and so faithfully, contended that he did not see what the Voluntary principle was worth if it could not stand this test. Here was a man beloved by his people, who had gone in and out among them and borne the burden and heat of the day for upwards of forty years, and now when his natural force was abated, and he was no longer fit for active duty, was seeking the rest he had so richly earned. Surely if ever there was a case in which the principle for which they contended, and which was one of the essentials of their Church, might be trusted to show its strength and vitality, without being sordidly tied down to a fixed amount, this was one. He accordingly moved that this worthy minister should be left to be dealt with as the affection of his congregation should dictate. This motion chimed in so completely with the temper of the time, and with the speeches that had been, and were being, delivered all over the country, that assent was given by acclamation, and a general cry of "Agreed, agreed," was about to be recorded as the finding of the meeting, when Mr Dunlop

(generally known as Wattie Dunlop) rose and said, "Mr Moderator and brethren, I was born a Voluntary, and I mean to dee a Voluntary, and nobody that kens me will accuse me of being lukewarm in the Voluntary cause; but I'm a Christian as weel's a Voluntary, and being a Christian I believe my Bible, and the Bible says that the heart o' man's deceitfu' above a' things and *desperately* wicked, and just because I believe my Bible I've aye insisted on having a bit written document on ony important money business I ever did in my life. I therefore move that Mr —— should have a fixed retiring allowance."

It need scarcely be said that Wattie's strong common-sense carried the day and completely upset the motion which was on the point of being carried, and a fixed retiring allowance was settled.

Coming nearer our own times, a combination of worldly wisdom and common-sense, based as this was on Bible principles, had a somewhat similar success in connection with the threatened secession from the Free Church in the north, owing to antagonistic views about the Declaratory Act. At a presbytery meeting several members expressed themselves as dissatisfied

with the position of matters, and some by no means obscure hints of secession were given. At present, they said, things were not at all comfortable in the Free Church. The Moderator admitted that things were not very comfortable, "but," he added, "there are many different kinds of discomfort, and it is often both expedient and necessary to bear with discomfort. Do you think that we are the only persons who are uncomfortable? No, my friends. Do you think Jonah was comfortable in the whale's belly? No, my friends, we may be sure he was very far from being comfortable. But what did Jonah do because he was uncomfortable? Did he take a knife out of his pocket and cut to the right and the left so as to get out? No, my friends; Jonah, like a sensible man, remained where he was till, in the providence of God, he was *putt* out. And so, my friends, we cannot be wrong to follow Jonah's Biblical example and stay where we are till we are *putt* out." It is said that this advice was largely followed, and to a considerable extent checked the secession in that presbytery.

Both in the Highlands and Lowlands there are not wanting instances in which the relation of individual effort to Providence is not, as with

Jonah, one of passive acquiescence, but is tacitly regarded as a kind of limited liability, as when Donald in crossing a ferry on a very stormy night was nearly drowned, and only after a severe struggle contrived to scramble ashore. On reaching home his wife said to him, "Ah, Donald, Providence has been very good to you."

"Yes, Mary," he replied, "but I was pretty clever too myself."

A similar case is that of the old lady to whose trust in Providence there was a distinctly materialistic limit, and who when, by herself, driving a pair of spirited ponies down a steep hill lost command of them, but without serious consequences. On being asked what she did when the ponies bolted, she replied, "I just lay back, and put my feet on the splashboard and my trust in Providence till the breeching broke."

More satisfactory evidence of the belief that

> "There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough-hew them how we will,"

is found in the case of two old ministers who had been many years colleagues in the same charge. Both had considerably outlived the threescore years and ten, and casting a retrospective glance on their past lives, one of them

expressed his admiration of the way in which in their case Providence had overruled matters; that they had been colleagues for thirty years, and never had a quarrel.

"Yes," said the other, "but we have not made much of it, for our church is nearly empty."

"True," replied his friend, "but that's just where we see the hand of Providence again. Being colleagues, we have nearly emptied only one church; if we had had separate charges we would have nearly emptied two."

Continuing the conversation, one remarked that he thought it was more tiring to listen to a sermon than to preach it.

"Yes," said the other, "I have often found that I was more fatigued hearing you preach than when I preach myself."

"Well, then," was the reply, "it's a very great pity of them that must hear us both."

I knew intimately a minister, Mr X, in mental and moral build not unlike the two just referred to. Like them, he was not harassed by any ideas of "vaulting ambition"; like them, constitutionally tired, he gave not only otiose acquiescence but hearty approval to the workings of Providence towards his church and his

relation to it. He was very stout, the reverse of energetic, and his church, which in other hands might have been full, was very thinly attended. For an important object a very popular preacher, Dr *Z*, on one occasion filled Mr X's pulpit. The church was crammed in every corner, and the night was sultry. Mr X being, as I have said, very stout, found the heat oppressive, and meeting Dr *Z* as he came down the pulpit stairs he said, while he mopped his perspiring forehead, "Man, Dr *Z*, I'm gled I'm no poap-lar."

I recall some instances in which the providential management was not quite so satisfactory as in those mentioned. A dignitary of the Scottish Episcopal Church, who enjoyed his pipe, had comfortably installed himself in an empty smoking-compartment of a railway carriage. At a station near a fishing village the door was opened by a fishwife. The clergyman, wishing to be alone, said to her very civilly, "My good woman, this is a smoking-compartment," a remark to which she paid no attention. Thinking she was probably deaf, he repeated the remark in a louder tone. By this time the woman had taken the creel from her shoulders and was pushing it into the carriage. Still no notice

was taken. For the third time, and in quite a stentorian voice, he shouted the same intimation. The woman made no reply, but got into the carriage, and, taking a pipe from her pocket, she filled it with strong twist tobacco, lit it, and looking to the clergyman, said, "Ye thocht nae-body could smoke but yoursel', my bonnie man."

One morning on leaving Aberdeen by an early train I got into a smoking-compartment in which a gentleman was smoking a fine full-flavoured cigar. At a station a few miles farther on an old man came into the carriage smoking a pipe of very strong tobacco. The gentleman with the cigar evidently disliked the smell of the coarse tobacco, and in the hope of getting rid of it took out his cigar-case and asked the old man if he would not try one of his cigars. "Oh, thank ye, sir," said the other, taking one out of the case; "I like fine to smoke thae weak half-papery, half-tobacco things in the evening, but I like a pipe better in the morning, and I'll just finish my pipe noo," at the same time putting the cigar into his pocket. The owner of the cigar was so tickled with the humour of the incident that he pardoned the injury to himself and the insult to his cigar, and took a hearty laugh, in which I joined him.

Yet another case in which the arrangement was not satisfactory. In front of the manse of Birse in Aberdeenshire there was once a deep marsh. A former laird of Finzean in riding to the manse took a short cut to the front door through this marsh, in which his horse got completely bogged and could not get out. The laird in his difficulty shouted out to Mr Smith, the minister, "Ho, Minister! how can you help me out of this?" "I dinna ken hoo I can help you; it's a part o' my parish I've never been in."

A minister in the north of Scotland, who was too much given to flowery language in his sermons, had a very matter-of-fact wife who had no sympathy with her husband's lofty flights, and thought it to be her duty to correct this weakness. She accordingly tried to keep him in check by either coughing or shuffling with her feet on the floor when she thought he was going beyond reasonable limits, and often succeeded. But one day when he was preaching on the fall of man he said, "Henceforth the earth was to be enriched with the sweat of man's brow and watered with woman's tears." Coughing and shuffling were too weak for the occasion, and she was heard to exclaim, "Eh, what an awfu' like mixture!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

JOINT UNIVERSITY AND NORMAL SCHOOL TRAINING—NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN THE TRADITION OF THE OLD PARISH SCHOOL —PROGRESS MOST SATISFACTORY—TRAINING COLLEGE CURRICULUM WIDENED AND RAISED—ATTITUDE OF EDINBURGH BOARD TOWARDS PRACTICE IN SINGING—VISITS TO ENGLISH TRAINING COLLEGES—STUDENTS' DINNER SCHEME—SECONDARY SCHOOLS—ORGANISATION IMPROVED—EDINBURGH MERCHANT COMPANY SET THE EXAMPLE OF REFORM — LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH'S ENDOWED SCHOOL COMMISSION—SPLENDID RESULTS.

I SHOULD be departing from the main purpose of these reminiscences were I to enter in any detail into the changes that have taken place during the last forty years in the attainments of pupil-teachers on their admission to apprenticeship, and their mental equipment as teachers on leaving the Training College as qualified teachers. One has only to compare the ludicrously meagre attainments of pupil-teachers in the 'Sixties with what is now demanded of them, to see that the boy of sixteen has, all over, higher attainments than the boy of eighteen of forty years ago. The

same is true of girls. Commencing their apprenticeship on a much higher level, many contrive, during the currency of it, to compete for more or fewer leaving certificates as a preparation for entering the university. This marks a height of attainment which forty years ago was hopelessly out of reach.

A rapid sketch of the means by which this was brought about is probably not out of place.

Joint University and Normal School Training.

I had under my charge, during the first sixteen years of my service, the counties of Aberdeen, Banff, and Moray, in which, as I have already said, the parish schools were almost invariably filled by men who had a full university course. In view of prospective legislation which might interfere with the continuance of this, and of the fact that, in a number of cases elsewhere in Scotland, men of purely Normal School training had been appointed to parish schools, it seemed probable that in the course of a few years the majority of our parish schools would be similarly staffed. I therefore thought it important to consider how far the curriculum of the Normal School was (by itself) fitted to

furnish a body of teachers who could maintain the fine tradition of the old parish school. There could be no doubt that it was totally unfit. The various Training Colleges did their work faithfully and well, but they did not pretend to more than the fringe of higher subjects, for the too good reason that the average pupil-teacher was not prepared to receive more.

In my first general report for 1865 I pointed this out, and sketched roughly a scheme by which attendance at the university might be conjoined with Normal College training without injury to the latter. During the two years that followed before a second general report was required of me, I had a very large amount of communication, personal and written, with Sir Francis Sandford, and the rectors of the four Training Colleges then existing, as to its feasibility. The result was general approval. My colleagues, Drs Wilson and Middleton, also made one or two references in support of it. Year after year I returned to the subject in successive reports, but it was not till after the separation of the Scottish from the English Department, and we had got a code of our own, that the first mention of permission to attend university classes appeared in the Code of 1873. Queen's

Scholars were allowed to attend not more than two classes, and their attendance at the Training College was correspondingly reduced. It commenced in a tentative way in 1874, when the four colleges sent up 33 students. In 1878 and ever since, the permission was practically extended to any number of classes, subject to the consent of the Training College authorities, who may dispense with the students' attendance at the Training College during the university session for such time as they may deem necessary. The number of students availing themselves of this permission has steadily increased, till now nearly 400 are enrolled every year, and when the report for 1901 appears, it will be found that not fewer than 5000 Training College students have during the last twenty-seven years received a more or less complete university education. In some, and probably in all the colleges, two-thirds of the male entrants come up having already gained so many leaving certificates as are considered equivalent to passing the preliminary examination for entrance into the university. It is expected that two or three years hence, between male and female students, from 150 to 200 Masters of Arts will be sent out every year as teachers.

My being in close contact with the parish teachers of the three Dick Bequest counties—men of distinctly superior education—probably accounts for my attitude towards this question. But having taken an early and active interest in it, there is perhaps no part of my work in the education field to which I look back with greater satisfaction.

This result could not be brought about without very considerable changes in the curriculum of the Training Colleges; but they were carried out gradually, and have been directed in almost every case towards something more robust and educative than the prescriptions of the early syllabus. Duplication of examination on the less important subjects was abolished, and the range of mathematics and science was extended. Time was found for higher work in the more educative subjects by cutting down or abolishing those that were less so, and for which satisfactory provision had been made during the four years of the pupil teacher's course. When the Training Colleges came directly under my supervision in 1888, I found that the most distasteful and harassing task of the students was the committing to memory for repetition, *and repetition only*, of 300 lines of poetry in both the first and

second years of training. This seemed to me more a school than a college exercise, and made a drain on the student's time out of all proportion to its usefulness. I obtained the consent of the Department to its abolition. I had observed that instruction in French and German was entirely confined to translation and grammatical drill; that attention to pronunciation was in most of the colleges *nil* and in none sufficient, because it was not tested, and carried no marks in examination; and that the majority of students left the Training Colleges nominally qualified to teach a language, their pronunciation of which was absolutely unrecognisable. Further, the translation from Latin, Greek, French, and German was all from prescribed books. I felt certain, from the improved curriculum of pupil-teachers, that the majority could attack with fair success unseen passages judiciously chosen. My suggestions for remedy in these and other subjects, which it is unnecessary to mention, received the sanction of the Department, with unquestionable improvement of the curriculum, and without unduly increasing the work of the student, who had to face the double and difficult task of taking a good place in both Training College and university subjects.

An important change in the syllabus issued last year is the substitution of experimental laboratory treatment for mere bookwork in science. Any subject which conveniently lends itself to such treatment may be chosen, subject to the approval of the Department, but a general consensus of opinion has led to the adoption of the following course in all the Training Colleges —viz., Physics, followed by Chemistry, in the winter session of both years; and Botany, followed by Zoology, in the summer sessions. In both cases the course is one of first-hand investigation of the actual facts of the science, with as little reference as possible to text-books.

The change from the cramming of text-books to first-hand investigation of facts in the laboratory is directly in the line of Lord Balfour's admirable installation address as Chancellor of St Andrews University. A modern university must deal with principles and encourage original research. "For this purpose," said his lordship, "the university must have full equipment, and must be furnished with teachers of special attainments who will direct and guide original research." In no way and at no time can a better beginning in this direction be made than by training those who are to be teachers in our schools in personal

investigation of the science subjects they are to teach. School education conducted on these lines, and with steady regard to underlying principles, cannot fail to influence university teaching, and so make school and university act and react on each other. This is doubtless the motive of the change.

The musical training has generally been reported by the late Sir John Stainer and Dr M'Naught as generally satisfactory, and in several of the colleges excellent. In addition to school songs, cantatas of Gounod and Coleridge, and choruses of Schubert, Handel, Bishop, and Mendelssohn, are rendered tastefully and with spirit. It is matter for sincere regret that, so far as Edinburgh schools are concerned, almost the whole of this admirable training is absolutely unused. Edinburgh is the only considerable town or city in Great Britain where the teaching of school music is, except in the infant departments and one or two schools, exclusively the function of the visiting masters, who, as a rule, make one visit per week. It is a branch with which the ordinary staff, nine-tenths of whom have been pronounced by the musical experts above mentioned fully qualified for the work, dare not, or at any rate do not, interfere.

It is now eleven years since I first directed the attention of the Edinburgh Board to this matter, suggesting that, even as a means of recreative discipline and brightening of school work, it was a pity not to utilise the abundant appliances they had at hand. In subsequent reports I recurred to the subject four or five times, assuring them that I had the authority of Sir John Stainer and Dr M'Naught for saying that the ordinary school staff could be employed in teaching singing without the slightest injury, and even with advantage, to the special functions of the visiting masters. I did not at any time, and I do not now, suggest their discontinuance, or say a single word in their disparagement. I believe they do their work probably as well as it can be done. I only wished children to have more practice when abundant means were available. To all my appeals a deaf ear was turned, and up to the present time there seems to be no change. I see that my successor, Dr Stewart, in a recent report follows suit in vigorous terms in disapproval of this policy. It is difficult to believe that, as a rule, in the juvenile and upper departments, except during the visiting master's weekly hour, there is no exercise of ear, voice, or lungs in singing from one week's

end to the other, though in almost every class-room, and certainly in every school, there is an abundant supply of competent teachers of singing. It is one of the few cases in my experience in which suggestions of a practical and obviously common-sense character have been steadily ignored.

Near the end of 1888 I spent one week with Mr (now Sir Joshua) Fitch, and another with Mr (now Sir H. E.) Oakeley, Inspectors of English Training Colleges. I found their system and methods very similar to those pursued in Scotland. I visited with them several colleges, some for male and others for female students. At this time all English colleges for both sexes were, I think, residential. I have no doubt that for female students a residential college is on many grounds desirable. Regular and sufficient food and regular hours for study are thereby secured. The temptation to overwork under pressure of examination, and to under-feeding under pressure of necessity, are sometimes too strong to be resisted. In Scotland there are only two residential female colleges, the Episcopal in Edinburgh and the Roman Catholic in Glasgow. Both are admirably managed. To all the other colleges there are attached boarding-houses for

a large proportion of the female students, the management of which is also highly satisfactory. For male students it is doubtful if residential colleges are to be preferred. Regular hours for study and sufficient food are no doubt quite as important for them as for females, but the broadening and liberalising influence arising from intercourse with others than those who have the same professional aims as themselves would be lost in the semi-monastic life of a residential college. The more men rub shoulders with others who have different pursuits from themselves, the better fitted are they for the general business of life. Under existing arrangements they breathe a freer and, given an average amount of prudence, a more wholesome and invigorating atmosphere, and have opportunities of acquiring habits of self-reliance in matters other than professional, which are more necessary for them than for the softer sex, as contributing to success in their future career.

For two, and in many cases three years, the strain of successfully overtaking the combined work of Training College and university is a severe one, and I found that in bearing it few had the support that comes from a generous diet, and that almost every year some broke down.

The rectors had no doubt that this was due to overwork and the absence of a substantial mid-day meal. In Edinburgh the majority of the students come from the country and live in lodgings, where I found on personal inquiry that their food was in many cases both insufficient and badly cooked. By an appeal to those interested in education I set on foot in 1893 a movement in Edinburgh for providing, for such students as chose, a plain nourishing dinner at a price within their moderate means. The scheme has been beyond expectation successful. It is common to the Established and Free Church Colleges, in each of which a dining-room has been provided, and about 130 students take advantage of it. The rectors of both colleges, who preside in the respective dining-halls, give a most encouraging account of the beneficial results of the scheme in all respects, moral, social, and physical. We have put aside a proportion of the subscriptions to form the nucleus of a permanent fund, and there is accordingly good reason to expect that the scheme will be permanent.

There are now eight Training Colleges, two being commenced in Aberdeen in 1886, and one Roman Catholic Female College in Glasgow in 1896.

LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Between 1860 and 1885, when, in the latter year, the Department undertook the inspection of secondary schools, I was able without interference with my official duties to inspect and report on the majority of secondary schools between Elgin and Ayr. Since 1885 I have taken part in the inspection which must be accepted by all schools that send in candidates for the leaving certificate examination. Of the 93 visited in 1901 I inspected, at one time or another, at least 40 either unofficially or by instruction of the Department. The condition of many of these schools thirty-five years ago was widely different from what it is now. Even in some of the best the organisation was very unsatisfactory. In many of them the rectors were not central sources of authority; and in several, where they legally had rectorial power, they did not choose to exercise it. Each teacher was a law unto himself, and fought for his own hand, and each pupil paid for just as many classes in each department as he chose. In English and commercial subjects the pupils were of course more numerous than in the mathematical and classical ones. To secure for each master a fair proportion of fees, geography and history, which naturally go together, were separ-

ated, geography being handed over to the mathematical, and history to the classical master, or *vice versa*. In some schools pupils went up from class to class, year after year, altogether irrespective of examination or proved fitness to keep abreast of the more advanced work of the class into which they were automatically promoted. In many cases, by the joint advice of the examiners associated with me, some of these glaring weaknesses were remedied, but nothing has done so much to bring secondary education into line, the autonomy of each school being at the same time preserved, as the institution of the leaving certificate examination introduced in 1887. There is no part of the educational field to which Sir Henry Craik has given greater attention, or on the success of which he is to be more heartily congratulated, than his scheme of a leaving certificate examination.

In a book of reminiscences largely scholastic I cannot omit a reference to an educational movement of vast importance, not only as affecting the locality in which it originated, but as probably giving the first impulse to the movement which resulted in the Endowed Schools Commission. This Commission, over which

Lord Balfour of Burleigh presided, has, all over Scotland, utilised to the fullest extent, and practically without violation of the intentions of the pious founders, funds which previously were comparatively unproductive. I mean the action of the Merchant Company of Edinburgh in converting their hospitals into day-schools open to all. In 1869—the year preceding the conversion—the number of pupils in the schools of the Merchant Company was 428. In the first session thereafter there were 3400 pupils on the roll; in the second session the number rose to 4100, and now it is within a little of 6000. The number of teachers and governesses is 233.

The history of George Heriot's Foundation is similar. A hospital for 180 boys from 1628 till 1885, when it was opened as a day-school, it has now on its roll nearly 1000 pupils, and is a fully equipped science school. I have many times examined all these schools. There is but one opinion among all who have examined them of the excellence of the work done. If further corroboration is sought, it will be found in the splendid list of university honours in every branch of study.

Gordon's College in Aberdeen has the same

tale to tell. When I examined it first in 1863, and for eight or ten years afterwards, there were only 180 pupils, and the education, though sound, was mainly elementary. It now takes rank with a roll of 800 pupils as a fully equipped science school. Here, as in the Edinburgh schools referred to, the fees are low and the education excellent. The foundationers, formerly boarded and clothed in the hospitals, and more or less cooped up in a quasi-monastic institution, receive equivalent allowances, live with their parents or guardians, dress as they please, and enjoy the natural liberty best suited to enable them to discharge successfully the duties of citizenship.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE BITTERS LATITUDE—GIVE IT A GOOD NAME—SUDDEN METEOROLOGICAL CHANGE—BIBULOUS SCOTLAND—"HE PUT TOO MUCH WATER IN HIS WHISKY"—ITS PRESERVATIVE QUALITIES—SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION—AN AWFUL RISK—A HIGHLAND FUNERAL—ROMAN CATHOLIC RAG-GATHERERS—THE MOST DANGEROUS FORM OF DRUNKENNESS—SABBATH OBSERVANCE IN THE HIGHLANDS—"MEN"—SUPERSTITIONS.

EVERY man who has travelled much in the Highlands must have observed that, when he has reached a certain degree of latitude, the morning dram is a preliminary to breakfast in practically every house in which the *ménage* is fairly comfortable, or in what may be called a "bien house," whether it be the house of a minister, a well-to-do farmer, or a laird. This at any rate was the case thirty years ago. It is usually called bitters, and it often is a mixture of bitters and whisky, but it is also sometimes simply whisky. It is natural to infer from this that Highlanders must be more drunken

than Lowlanders. So far as I have observed, such an inference is unwarranted. It is usually a very small drop, about one-fourth of a wine-glass or less. I have often seen gentlemen, and sometimes ladies, of irreproachably temperate habits, pay a visit to the sideboard and the bottle of bitters before sitting down to breakfast. When I visited Russia in 1897 I found the same custom prevalent on board Swedish and Russian steamers and in restaurants, and Swedes and Russians of that social class are not a notoriously intemperate people. I am unable to account for the custom, and I am not concerned to maintain that it is a good one. I only state the fact. It may be due to climatic conditions common to Sweden and the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. If I may believe, and I know no reason why I should not, the account given me by a hotelkeeper in the west of Ross-shire, I should be disposed to assign the climate as the cause, seeing that Englishmen, when exposed to the same conditions, take kindly to the custom.

Some thirty years ago I was staying in the Balmacara Hotel, near Strome Ferry. During my stay a displenishing sale at a large farm in the neighbourhood was to take place. The ferry

crossings at Kylerhea and Kyleakin are sometimes very troublesome, and farmers from considerable distances had come to the hotel on the night previous to the sale in view of possibly bad weather. On going into the commercial room for breakfast I found it full of these visitors, and Mr Macrae, the landlord, going round, bottle in hand, with the so-called bitters. When in due course he came to me, I asked in joke if it wasn't a very bad thing to drink whisky before breakfast.

"Oh no," he replied, "it is a very good old custom."

"But," I said, "if English people saw us taking whisky in the morning they would think we were a very drunken lot."

"Well," he replied, "I'll tell you my experience. When the Englishmen will come here, I'll give them a small drop just like the rest, and they'll pull a very ugly face, and say, 'Ach, Mr Macrae, it's very bad!' I'll never mind them, but I'll just persevere for three or four days, and give them a small drop every morning. And do you know, they find it does them good, and they'll come to like it, and they'll call it a tonic, and take it every morning whatever, and pull ugly faces no more."

I am assured that the custom has now to a large extent died out. Mr Macrae's illustration of the fact that one drop of bitters makes the whole world kin is corroborated by the experience of an Englishman on his first visit to Scotland. He was an oldish man, but very plucky, and had made up his mind to make good use of his visit, even at the cost of personal inconvenience. He paid a visit to Arran, where a company of volunteers were camping out. They were to change guard at an early hour in the morning, and the old gentleman, having resolved to do everything thoroughly, left his comfortable bed and repaired to the camping-ground. It was a cold raw morning, and his nose was blue and moist. He looked the very picture of discomfort, and could not help railing against the climate and the weather as the worst he had ever experienced. A friend of mine near him took pity on him and gave him from his flask a glass of undiluted whisky. This had not reached its destination more than a few minutes when he turned round rubbing his hands gleefully, and with a beaming countenance exclaimed, "Well, 'pon my word, this is a glorious morning."

Several considerations furnish very clear evi-

dence that as a people we are bibulous, and not exactly models of temperance. It is not an elevating reflection that in Edinburgh, and probably elsewhere, "the trade" is universally understood to mean the whisky trade. It may be said that this is because the making of whisky is a very large industry in Scotland. But "the trade" designates the retailer as well as the manufacturer, and where the retailing of any product is *par excellence* "the trade" there is good reason for supposing that a very wide and liberal use is made of the article retailed. Further, a very large proportion of amusing anecdotes have a distinct whisky basis. Some that are subjects of my own experience may be worth recording.

During a visit to Mull I went out one day to fish for sea-trout in the Dervaig, taking with me Sandy Munn, a well-known character in Mull. At lunch-time we sat down by the side of the stream. I said to Sandy, "Will you have a sandwich?"

"If you please, sir."

A sandwich or two having been disposed of, I asked him if he would take a dram.

"If you please, sir."

I took my flask out of my pocket and poured

a decent glass of whisky into the cup, and bending down to the stream I said, "I had better put a little water into it."

Sandy with an agonised shriek bawled out, "Goot Got! waater in whusky! No waater in my whusky to spoil the goot drink. Waahter! Waahter!!"

Sandy Munn does not stand alone among Highlanders in his preference for undiluted whisky. Three old men—Hector, Donald, and Duncan—had met for many years for their "meridian" or mid-day dram. They were all old men, but Donald and Duncan were considerably older than Hector. It was, however, Hector's fate to fall ill and die somewhat unexpectedly. This was a great shock to his two comrades, and for a week or two their daily forgathering was given up. As might be expected, however, they by-and-by returned to their old habits. On the first occasion of their return Donald said to Duncan, talking of their departed friend, "The ways of Providence, Duncan, is fery strange. Why should Hector, a younger man than you or me, and a strong man too, be taken away before us?"

"Yes, Donald, the ways of Providence is fery strange, to be sure. I'll not jist be able to say why Hector has been taken away before us,

From a Sketch by James Cadenhead, R.S.W.

"Ach! aach! No waater in my whusky."

but there was one thing I noticed,—I always thocht he wud be puttin' too much waater in his whusky."

There are a good many ways of civilly indicating a modified satisfaction with the treatment one receives in the matter of drams. A lady who thought it wrong to give undiluted whisky to any one, gave a man, for some little service rendered, her usual mixture of whisky-and-water. After taking a sip he said to her, "Did you put in the water or the whisky first?"

"I put in the whisky first," she replied.

"Oh, very well, I suppose I'll come to the whisky by-and-by."

To another man who did not seem quite satisfied she said, "A glass of whisky and a glass of water is a very good dram."

"Yes," he replied, "but not so good as two glasses of whisky and no water."

I had evidence of belief in the preservative or antiseptic power of whisky in a conversation I had with an old man in Perthshire, who informed me that he had been in the service of Lord Breadalbane for forty-five years as a boatman on Loch Tay. As he looked fresh and vigorous I remarked that he must have commenced his service very early.

"Ah," he replied, "I'm an older man than you wud be thinking."

"Indeed; what is your age?"

"I'll be seventy-two next summer."

"Well," I remarked, "you would pass for ten years less than that."

"Oh yes; you see I wud be always gettin' a small drop of whusky, and then the fresh air wud be a goot thing too."

The views of total abstainers are widely different from those of the old boatman. In Forfar a Mr Murphy was giving a lecture on the dreadful effects of long and continuous indulgence in the use of alcohol. He mentioned, with most circumstantial details, a case in which a man who had drunk to excess for a number of years was so completely saturated with alcoholic fumes that one night when he was blowing out a candle his breath took fire, and he died in a short time from spontaneous combustion. One of the audience came up to the platform and said that he wished to thank Mr Murphy for having saved his life.

"How," said Mr Murphy, "have I saved your life?"

"Yes," he replied, "you've saved my life. I'll never blow out a candle as long as I live."

Two workmen met in the morning after a

night of heavy drinking. They were very thirsty, but could not muster more than the price of one glass of whisky. While they were about to share it a friend came in on the same errand. They offered him the glass, which he took and finished. He felt he could not do less than offer them each a glass in return. He then went away. One said to the other, "Now, wasna that weel managed?"

"It was so," he replied, "but, man, it was an awfu' risk."

On another of my visits to Mull Mr L., whose guest I was to be for a few days, sent his servant and dogcart to meet me at Tobermory pier. It was a cold raw day, and as Donald had been waiting for some time the arrival of the steamer, I thought he would probably have no serious objection to a dram, and found I was not mistaken. I accordingly took him into the hotel. He had not been told who I was, and made sundry attempts to find out. Amused at his curiosity, I did not at once enlighten him. As a final attempt he said, when about to drink my health over his dram, "I wud be thinking, and wass almost sure, you wud be a frien' of Mrs L.'s." I replied that I was no relation of hers. "No? Well you wass fery like her.

Your fery goot helse whatefer." I need scarcely say that my likeness to Mrs L. was purely imaginary and inquisitorial.

It happened that this was the funeral day of a highly esteemed citizen of Tobermory, out of respect to whose memory the coffin was to be carried a distance of eight or ten miles to the churchyard by relays of his friends and admirers. The churchyard was in the same direction as the house which was my destination. The funeral procession—a very large one—had already started, and the road was so narrow that it would have been somewhat difficult, and almost disrespectful, to have pressed past it. We accordingly followed at a walking pace. On each side of the coffin walked a man with a bottle of whisky for the refreshment of the relays of bearers, and behind the procession came a cart with the abundant supply of eatables and whisky which are the usual accompaniments of a Highland funeral. After we had gone two or three miles Donald said that if I had no objection he would let me drive myself, for he had a great respect for the deceased, and he would like to take a share of what was going. I daresay he meant me to understand, and perhaps also really meant, a share of the labour of carrying the

coffin, but it struck me that it might have a consequential though unavowed reference to the liberal distribution of whisky to the bearers, on the principle that the labourer is worthy of his hire. Whatever his meaning, I consented, and Donald took a share of "what was going" in both senses.

When he drove me back to Tobermory some days afterwards I noticed on Morven an elegant little church, and asked him what church it was.

"Ah," he replied, "it's a popish Roman Catholic place."

"Indeed," I said; "I didn't know that you Highlanders were Roman Catholics."

"Ach, it will not be Highlanders that's in it. They're Irish."

"But how have they been able to build a fine church like that?"

"Oh, Lady Gordon will help them. She's a Catholic herself."

"But what do Irishmen get to do in Mull? I should have thought there would be no work for them here. What do they get to do?"

"Oh, they gather rags and the like o' that," in a Protestant contemptuousness of tone that could be assumed only in speaking of a congregation of Roman Catholic rag-gatherers.

Alcoholic anecdotes have doubtless a humorous side, but they have also a serious aspect which we cannot as a nation regard with satisfaction or the complacency of indifference.

In view of the abundance of such anecdotes as the foregoing (and I have selected only a few) we are compelled to admit the strong presumptive evidence of undue and regrettable excess in the consumption of whisky, and the misery, destitution, and crime which follow in its train. Proofs of it abound in every large city, especially on Saturday nights. In a sad number of cases the necessities of wives and children in the matter of food and clothing are heartlessly disregarded by men whose wages, if properly husbanded, would secure all the comforts of a happy though humble home. Unfortunately the wife is too often as drunken as the husband. Nothing short of a miracle can prevent the children of such dissolute parents from swelling the ranks of the criminal classes.

I remember seeing a boy of not more than seven years of age selling matches at the Register House in Edinburgh at nearly twelve o'clock at night. There was a cold wind blowing, and the poor little fellow had availed himself of a projecting part of the building as

a shelter from the wind. He looked so pale, worn, and dejected that I spoke to him, bought a box of his matches, and asked him why he was out on the street so late. "I daurna," he replied, "gang hame till I have selled a' my matches." I bought all he had left, and asked at what time he went to bed. In a piteously languid tone he replied, "Just ony time." Hardly anything could be more pathetic than the hopeless sadness of the answer, as if, infant as he was, the iron had already entered into his soul, and there was nothing for it but passive acquiescence in the hardened neglect of his parents. Abandoned thus morally and physically, what did mature age, if he should ever reach it, promise for such a child but a permanently twisted and debased nature?

But this tendency to excess is not confined to the lowest stratum of society. A more dangerous form of drunkenness than being conspicuously drunk once a-fortnight exists in a class who have never been seen drunk. I refer to young men who habitually have recourse to "nips" in the forenoon and throughout the day, and are unconsciously nearing the line which, once crossed, is seldom recrossed. Their resilient power is gone, and they are courting

the approach of the alcoholic demon whose grip once fastened is scarcely ever relaxed. I have known men of chivalrous nature and great ability, in whom conscientiousness, sense of duty, self-respect were conspicuous features,—men who had the strongest motives for maintenance of social position,—lose their crispness of brain, their will-power, their truthfulness, their self-respect, their regard for the happiness of those near and dear to them, through the insidious poison of habitual "nipping." And yet for years, while the habit was steadily growing, these men were never seen drunk. It is for this reason that I regard "nipping" as the most dangerous form of alcoholic abuse.

We must all bid God-speed to the numerous tea-rooms that have lately been established in large towns like Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Manchester. Twenty years ago there was generally no beverage to be had in restaurants that was not more or less intoxicating. Now milk, tea, cocoa, can not only be had, but are largely chosen, to the unquestionable advantage of young men whose habits and character are in process of taking permanent form.

There are several other respects in which, especially in the Highlands, great changes have

taken place during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Thanks to railways and greater intercourse with the South, the exceedingly narrow views of former times, in respect of Sabbath observance, have given place to what is broader, healthier, and more rational. In few districts now would shaving on Sunday be thought Sabbath desecration. But not more than thirty years ago a minister told me that in performing that simple and (to one who does not grow a beard) necessary operation he found it imperative to shut his dressing-room door most carefully, lest his servants should see him shaving, raise a scandal in the parish, and he be regarded as sitting in the chair of the scorner.

Another instance of the same narrowness of view is furnished in the experience of a young English lady who, when she was a visitor at a country house in Ross-shire, was reprimanded by an old gamekeeper for a perfectly harmless expression of surprise, which he thought was swearing. On the following Sunday, when she was out walking, she lost sight for a moment of her pet dog and gave a whistle to bring it to heel. The same gamekeeper heard her, and with sternly reproving tone and deprecatory

shake of the head said, "Ach, my leddy! sweerin's bad and bad enough, but whustlin' on the Sabbath! Ow!! Ow!!!"

A less ludicrous, but in its moral or rather immoral aspect more objectionable, instance than the foregoing is that of a Sutherland crofter who, on his deathbed, while bewailing his shortcomings, confessed to having stolen a sheep two years before—a theft which had not been proved against any one. The minister to whom he made the confession hoped he had prayed for forgiveness.

"Yes," said the man; "but that's not the biggest sin I have committed."

"What else have you done?" asked the minister.

"Well, sir," he replied, "there was one Sabbath I did not go to church for I was not well, and I was very thirsty, for it was a very warm day, and I went out to the well and brought in a canful of water, and I cannot get that sin out of my head."

It speaks equally for the irrational state of Sabbatarian feeling, whether we suppose that the man's contrition for carrying in the water was genuine, or that he thought the confession of it would raise him in the minister's estima-

tion. Under either supposition, morality fares badly.

It would be easy to accumulate examples, but it is not necessary. Those I have given are or were typical, and I know they are true.

At this time the Lord's Supper was regarded in the Highlands not as a means of grace, but as a test of discipleship, and it was accordingly thought almost sacrilegious presumption for any one below fifty or sixty years of age to sit down at the communion-table. This feeling is somewhat modified, but it is not yet extinct.

Any one who has been much in the country districts of the north of Scotland at the time of which I speak must have come across quasi-ecclesiastical functionaries who are, if not peculiar to the Highlands, at any rate more outstanding and incomparably more influential than in the Lowlands. They are elders of the church, but prominent ones, and are denominated *par excellence* MEN. They are often uneducated, always strictly evangelical, generally fluent of speech, unctuous in prayer, conscious of power, and sometimes not indifferent to the good things of this life in the shape of meat and drink, with which they are abundantly supplied during rounds of visits extending some-

times over two or three months. They owe their power over the labouring class to a gift of prayer, preaching, and catechising, which, owing nothing to the extraneous aid of school and college learning, but being regarded as heaven-sent, is of greater value, and worthy of deeper reverence than pulpit ministrations of ministers who required to be taught to preach and pray.

At the Disruption in 1843 the great majority of them left the Established Church. Their power and number are now much diminished. For the last forty years there has been no such functionary in the Established Church. They were not, except in the respects I have mentioned, of uniform type. Many were genuinely pious men, who showed great zeal in the discharge of duties of a missionary kind in large parishes where distance from the church was so great as to make regular attendance difficult. Of others an equally favourable estimate could not be given.

In Sutherland I got an amusing account of one of these missionary visits. In the course of conversation the *man* had got into a heated discussion on some knotty theological point with Mary Cameron, a maiden lady of very mature

years, sound knowledge of her Bible, and distinctly pronounced character. She had clearly the better of the argument, when the *man*, in order to escape ignominious defeat, discovered that it was time for family worship, and asked a servant to "bring in the books." He of course conducted the service, and in his prayer, among other petitions, said, "Oh Lord, we ask Thee to send down more light to Thine ancient handmaid Mary Cameron, that she may understand the Scriptures." Mary, smarting under the double wrong of the mean advantage he was taking when he had it all his own way, and the reference to herself as "ancient," sprang from her knees to her feet with, "It's just like your impudence to speak of me in that disrespectfu' way to my Maker."

The reverence paid to the *men* was strong enough to bear the strain of pronounced defects of character and conduct in respect of intemperance and other weaknesses. One *man* was known to be given to drinking not wisely but too well as often as opportunity presented itself. His praises as a godly man were nevertheless being sounded by a worthy woman, when a neighbour asked if it was not well known that he was often drunk, to which the reply was,

"Oh yes, many will be the times I have seen him drunk, but he's soun', soun'."

Superstitious beliefs about "the evil eye," quack medicines, and miraculous cures, though not yet extinct, have to a considerable extent decreased. I give some examples furnished to me by a doctor in the west of Ross-shire from his note-book.

A girl had the bone of her arm broken by falling over a form in school. After twenty-one days had elapsed the doctor was sent for and found a thread with three knots lying on the fracture, over which while knotting it an old woman pronounced some Gaelic verses. Many otherwise sensible people in the Highlands wear knotted threads on parts of the body as preventives or cures of disease. It is possible that the knots may be a survival from Catholic times of the beads on the rosary.

This doctor was called in to see a woman who had some outbreak on her face. On asking her to uncover her face he found it presented a most ghastly appearance, being all smeared with the blood of a black cock. This unfortunate fowl is a sovereign remedy for many troubles, and is sometimes in a vicarious way buried alive. Within the memory of people still living an

instance of this is known to have occurred in Ross-shire. An old man of great piety was very ill, and thought to be dying. His relatives, finding the usual remedies of no avail, called in the aid of a *wise woman*, who ordered them to dig a hole in the floor of the house and bury in it a black cock alive. This was accordingly done, but with what result is not recorded.

To cure dropsy, a bottle of water is brought from a well in an island in Loch Maree, and in the presence of the sufferer broken against a rock that had never been moved. The efficacy of this cure was tested within a few hundred yards of the residence of my informant three days before. To be bathed in the water of this well was believed to be a cure for lunacy, but the well is said to have dried up because a shepherd used the water as a cure for one of his dogs that was supposed to be mad.

A man had a child suffering from water in the head, and carried him on his back in a blanket from Lochcarron to Lochbroom and back—over 120 miles—to see a man who professed to cure such ailments. He got a bottle of water, a spoonful of which was to be given several times a day. The doctor found the water absolutely putrid.

Many of the common people would not for the world count their chickens, nor pronounce a baby pretty without first blessing it. "Bless the child, what a beauty!" &c. The blessing disarms the evil eye. The Irish Celt has the same superstitions. I had an Irish servant whom I found squeezing some brown hair into a small wound in her thumb. I asked what she was doing. She replied, "Sure, sur, it's nothin' but an ould fashion we have in Oireland. The dog this marnin' bit my thumb, and a hair of the dog that bit you is said to be a good cure, and I thought there moight be no harrum in tryin' it."

CHAPTER XXVI.

TEACHERS WITH RARE EXCEPTIONS EMINENTLY FAITHFUL AND TRUSTWORTHY — NO CHARITY FOR CHEATING — AMUSING MISTAKES—"MY KINGDOM FOR A HORSE."

THE impression left on my mind after long and intimate intercourse with teachers in respect of fidelity, earnestness of purpose, and honesty in the midst of many temptations to deception, is a distinctly favourable one. Under all the various forms of the Code there have been opportunities for falsification in registration and other matters affecting professional status, but they have been exceedingly seldom taken advantage of. Faithful, honest work has been the all but universal characteristic. I have found, of course, very considerable variations in the extent to which self-reliance in the working of exercises is insisted on in different schools, and I am far from saying that, even with the strictest possible supervision, there may not have been many instances of pupils getting unfair assistance from their neighbours

in figuring out sums in arithmetic; but cases of teachers deliberately conspiring with the pupils in dishonest work have been so rare as not to require more than a passing notice. When they did occur they were of course severely punished.

I remember a case in the neighbourhood of Glasgow in which the attempt to deceive was so clear that nothing but a serious reduction of grant would have met it. It was a denominational, not a board school, the correspondent for which, when I told him of the gravity of the offence and the consequent reduction of grant, besought me, by every consideration he could think of, to overlook it, and assured me that it would never happen again. I was inexorable, and the reduction was made. This manager, in talking of my severity to a brother correspondent of another school, said that as long as Kerr came to his school he would never have peace in this world. "Never mind," said his friend; "you will be all right in the next world, for you know there's no care [Kerr] in heaven."

On another similar occasion, when the most glaring deception was attempted by both teacher and pupil-teachers, I had a talk with them after the scholars were dismissed, and said to the mistress, that if discipline had any meaning, there

could be no stronger case for the refusal of the grant for that subject, than when there was an obvious conspiracy on the part of the staff to deceive the inspector, and that it was quite impossible to recommend payment of it. I added that I rather thought the Department would not think that a sufficient punishment. She said, "Oh, sir, would you not have a little charity?"

"Charity for cheating?" I replied. "None. I have charity for weakness, nervousness, mistakes, misconceptions, but none for cheating."

On yet another occasion, in a Sutherland school, I had no choice but to refuse the same grant for the same reason. Several times during the examination I heard the teacher whispering answers to my questions. To avoid finding fault with him in the presence of his pupils, but at the same time to let him know that I heard the whispers, I said, "I hear some whispering. You must not whisper to each other. Every boy must answer for himself." When the inspection was over I said, "Now, children, I need not keep you any longer—you may go away home." All rose, and some were moving towards the door when the teacher called them back, informing me that he always closed the school with prayer. When the prayer and blessing were gone through

with great unction, and the pupils dismissed, I told the teacher that I knew the whispering I had checked came from him, adding, "Don't you think that your attempt to deceive did more to undermine a sense of honesty in your pupils than your prayers and blessing did them good?" He agreed with me, said he was very sorry, and promised that it would not occur again.

I have great satisfaction in saying that I have few such cases to record.

In every school, however well taught and whatever the class of pupil, there is always in almost every subject a crop of blunders that have something memorable about them. Selection is the difficulty. When religious instruction was under Government supervision I often asked a class to write out from memory a few lines of a well-known psalm as a test of writing and spelling.

On one occasion I prescribed four lines of the first psalm, and got from one boy—

> "That man hath perfect blessedness
> Who walketh *on a stray*."

On another occasion the meaning of two lines of the second paraphrase was asked—

> "Give us each day our daily bread,
> And raiment fit provide."

I asked the meaning of "raiment," and got the answer "Clothes." Then what is "*fit* raiment"? Answer, "Hose and shoon."

An advanced class had read "Othello." The Moor, in his defence for marrying, says that Desdemona asked that he

> "Should all his pilgrimage relate,
> Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
> But not intentively."

I asked the meaning of "by parcels," and was told that she had got it by the *parcel post.*

There are few exercises more difficult for the average pupil than writing a paraphrase of a poetical passage, and none in which senseless blunders are so often made. The thoughtless girl or boy thinks that nothing more is necessary than to exchange one word for another which is found in the dictionary. For example, Milton speaks of the plausibility of Belial's speech, but says, "All was false and hollow," for which the paraphrase given was, "All was untrue and excavated."

I have the permission of a colleague to record one of a totally different type. In the 'Lady of the Lake' Fitz-James says to Roderick Dhu—

> "Now, yield thee, or by Him who made
> The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade!"

For this the paraphrase given was, "If ye dinna gie in, by God, I'll kill ye!" Distinctly colloquial, but perfectly correct, and probably more like Fitz-James's actual utterance than Sir Walter's version.

Chaucer in his Prologue, describing the "Merye Frier," says, "And rage he couthe as dothe a whelpe," for which the paraphrase given was, "He was a rough tyke"—not a bad paraphrase, but probably not what Chaucer meant.

It would be difficult to find a better example of confusion or absence of thought than is furnished by a girl in a high-class school, who in an essay on Newton wrote, "The philosopher Sir Isaac Newton was the first to make the great discovery that when an apple becomes over-ripe it falls to the ground"; or one showing less skill in composition and greater scarcity of ideas than the boy who, in an essay on salt, confined himself to the simple statement, "Salt is a stuff which, if it is not boiled with potatoes, makes them nasty."

My colleague Mr Scougal examining a class in history tried to get from them the other name of Graham of Claverhouse. To help them to it he asked them to name any Scottish songs they knew.

Among others "The Bonnets of bonny Dundee" was given. Getting a boy to repeat the refrain, "Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can," ending with "Up with the bonnets of bonnie Dundee," he said that Graham's other name was mentioned in that song, when a boy, delighted at the discovery, bawled out "Philip M'Cann."

It is pleasant to come across specimens of schoolwork in which more than average ability and something akin to sparkle and imagination are found. Instances of this kind are of course somewhat rare, by far the largest proportion of school-children, as of mankind generally, being essentially commonplace. The following strikes me as worth recording:—

At the examination of a higher class girls' school in Banff I prescribed as an exercise in composition 'The Autobiography of an old Horse.' One girl about fifteen years of age prefaced her exercise by saying that she was not up in natural history, nor knowing in horse-flesh, and ventured to substitute the following verses instead of the autobiography asked for:—

"Dear teacher, it is very hard
To write 'mid such a row:
My wits have gone to gather wool,
And addled is my pow.

'A horse, a horse, my kingdom for
A horse' of any kind!
A coal-black steed, a gallant grey,
A lame, a screw, a blind!

Come, Muses, Graces! come and help
A pilgrim on her way,
Who fain would climb Parnassus hill
On Pegasus this day.

Come, Jupiter! Come any one!
Will no one list my call?
Nay, nay, the Muses, Graces all
Are dressing for the ball.[1]

Pons asinorum I can't cross;
I'm fairly off the line,
Although my eyes look to the skies
In rolling frenzy fine.

No doubt good Mrs S—— expects
That all her youth and beauty
Before the Queen's examiner
This day will do their duty.

I'll give it up. The job is bad,
For aching are my orbs.
Excuse me, and I'll ever be
Your leal ELIZA FORBES."'

[1] There was to be a ball that night in Innes House, near Banff.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE TYPICAL FISHERMAN — INSCRIPTIONS—SIR GEORGE GROVE —CROFTERS AND DOMESTIC ANIMALS—A TICKLESOME CAR-DRIVER—IRISH BULLS AND REPARTEES—DANIEL WEBSTER, THE AMERICAN ORATOR — SIR JOHN MACDONALD — FIRE-BRIGADE DRILL.

My vacations in autumn were spent in various ways, sometimes in shooting and fishing in the north of Scotland, sometimes in England, very often in a run to the Continent, once to Ireland, and once to America. I shall confine myself to a very few of the reminiscences connected with these holiday excursions.

One sometimes hears humorous remarks, with a certain flavour of the epigram in them, from quarters where they are least expected. Some years ago I was one of a large party in a country house on the banks of Loch Awe. The party was so large that it was found expedient to divide it, one-half going to shoot, the other to fish. I joined the shooting section, and we returned with

a very fair bag, but the fishermen came home "clean." One man, however, had hooked a salmon of large size, which he played for a long time but failed to land. He gave a glowing description of the struggle he had with it, and of its very large size—a not unusual occurrence when the fish gets away. Duncan the ghillie, who had been with the shooting party, and evidently suspected some exaggeration in the fisherman's account, turned round to me and said with a doubtful shake of the head, "Ay, fishermen will go out in the morning full of hope, and they'll come back in the evening full of whusky, and the truth is not in them."

I have fished a good deal in various parts of Scotland, but with only two incidents worth noting. One of these I have always had great hesitation in mentioning to any but intimate friends with whom I have the reputation of being fairly truthful. I record it now even at the risk of being classed with those whom Duncan describes as not having the truth in them. I was fishing in the tidal water of the Ythan in Aberdeenshire, in a boat with low gunwale. My aim was sea-trout, it being well known that salmon scarcely ever take the fly when they are leaving the sea and hurrying up

to fresh water. They were abundant and lively, leaping all round, sometimes over my line, but with no designs on the hook. I had no hope of being successful, but success came in the most unexpected way and through no merit of mine, for a salmon 7½-lb. weight took a suicidal leap and fell into the boat. I need not say that I promptly secured him. I have only to add, as in some sort a backing to what may be thought a doubtful story, that it was not the first time a salmon had leapt into a boat in the tidal water of the Ythan.

As I have said, I take no credit for my share in this incident. There is, however, another about which I confess to have been rather pleased with myself. I was fishing for salmon in the river Carron in Ross-shire. One rose to the fly, and I struck at it with more vigour than an old and infirm rod could bear, with the result that it broke clean off at the top of the butt. The fish was still hooked, but being unable to use the reel I had little hope of landing it. Fortunately there was a boy beside me to whom I handed the broken butt. Taking the other part of the rod in my left and the line in my right hand, and releasing from the reel a good many yards to meet possible rushes on the

part of my captive, I succeeded by careful management and after a considerable time in landing an 8-lb. fish.

I spent part of one of my vacations in Caithness, and met there a former teacher of the parish school of Canisbay. He was a native of Morayshire, and had never taken kindly to the Caithnessians. As he was walking one day through the churchyard he saw a tombstone bearing the simple but effective inscription, "Here lies an honest man." He found, however, that its beautiful simplicity had caused it to be copied on several other tombstones. As this did not square with his opinion of the Caithness people, he composed the following comment on it, of which he gave me a copy:—

"Behold how many honest men
Beneath our feet are found,
While not a single one is seen
In all the country round.
The reason of this circumstance,
If after it you strive,—
They've buried all the honest men,
And left the rogues alive."

During the same vacation I remember seeing in the churchyard of Fort-William an epitaph which struck me as unique in character, singu-

larly unpretentious, and probably quite true. It makes no claim to the exceptional piety and philanthropy which are not unusual characteristics of tombstone inscriptions.

I forget the name and regiment to which the deceased belonged, and I leave them blank.

"Here lie the remains of —— ——, Captain —— ——. He was a true Highlander, a sincere friend, and the best deerstalker of his day."

On one of my visits to England I had the good fortune to make, some years before his death, the acquaintance of Sir George Grove, a man remarkable for the wide range of his accomplishments in many different directions, in all of which he left the impress of his ability and boundless energy. As civil engineer in the erection of lighthouses in Jamaica and Bermuda, as secretary at the Crystal Palace, as author of the 'Dictionary of Music and Musicians,' as editor of 'Macmillan's Magazine,' as founder of the Palestine Exploration Fund, and as Dean Stanley's literary executor, he showed that he had the rare faculty of doing well whatever he undertook. Intercourse with a man of such wide and various culture was delightfully stimulative. Genial and kind-hearted, with a large amount of quiet humour and an excellent memory, he

narrated his experiences with admirable point. One of these was a striking and almost tragic incident, an account of which he got, if I am not mistaken, from the British consul in Cuba, who was himself a prominent actor in it.

A British subject in Cuba at a time when it was under martial law was one night passing along a street when he saw a crowd and went up to see the cause of it. He saw a man lying dead, some one having murdered him. In a few minutes the crowd moved off on the approach of the gendarmes and left him standing beside the dead body. He was accordingly charged with the murder and taken to prison, tried by court-martial, and sentenced to be shot next morning at eight o'clock. He sent a message to the British consul, who, being satisfied that he was innocent, went in full official costume to the place of execution, and found the firing party prepared to carry out the sentence. Going up to the lieutenant in charge he said, "I hear you are about to execute one of my countrymen." "Yes," said the officer, "he has been found guilty of murder." The consul interceded for him and urged delay for further investigation, but in vain. He then asked permission to go up and speak to the accused.

This being granted, he went up, and taking from his pocket a union-jack spread it over the condemned man. Then turning round he said, with a gesture towards the lieutenant, "Shoot now, if you dare." The man's life was thus saved.

Sometimes clever witticisms are found in unexpected places. On this same visit I went to see some of my old Cambridge friends, and found on the fly-leaf of an anthem book in Trinity College Chapel four lines which, in the opinion of the author of them, represented Dr Whewell's estimate of himself:—

> "The man who 'midst comets and galaxies travels,
> And nebulous films to the utmost unravels,
> Will find when he's reached the verge of infinity,
> That God's greatest work is the Master of Trinity."

In Ireland there is an amount of familiarity or friendship between owners of the crofter class and domestic animals which is common to the Scottish and Irish Celt, though not so fully developed in the former as in the latter. A gentleman whom I knew well said that a poor woman, from whom he had bought a horse, came to him as winter was approaching and insisted on having the horse returned, because in the cold weather the "childher" needed it for

a pillow. It is well known that the heat of cows, pigs, and horses is thus utilised in Kerry, and perhaps elsewhere in Ireland.

Of similar type is a story told me by a lady in Sutherland, who called one day on a crofter's wife and asked how they were all getting on, to which the reply in a somewhat sad tone was—

"Oh, we're just pretty well."

"You don't seem," said the lady, "to be in very good spirits. Is there anything wrong?"

"No, we're just pretty well."

"I'm sure from the way you speak that there is something the matter. Are your husband and the children all well?"

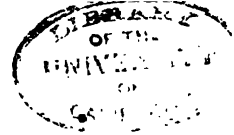
"Yes," still sadly, "we are just pretty well."

"Have you lost any relation lately?"

"No, not exactly a relation, but we have had a great disappointment."

"Indeed; what is it?"

"Well, we had a nice black pig. It wass not exactly a relation, but it's in and out of the house it wud be going just like a little dog, and we wass all fery fond of the black pig, and the black pig wass fery fond of us too—a nice warm-hearted pig it wass. And just three days since the black pig became fery unwell, and I wass



fery sorry for it, and I wud be doing all I could to make it better, and I gave it some castor-oil, but it wass no better, no better, and we wass all fery sorry. Then I wud give it some more castor-oil, and go out to the field to do some work, and when I came in about an hour after, the black pig wass"—breaking down completely with tears in her voice and eyes—"the black pig wass . . . wass before its Maker."

Nor is this attribution of quasi-human characteristics and relations to the lower animals confined to Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland. I knew an old labourer, Bob Docherty, in an Ayrshire village, who contrived to make both ends meet by adding to the work of his hands the proceeds of a litter of pigs periodically presented to him by a brood sow, which fell seriously ill. Bob was much respected, and great sympathy was felt for him. One of his neighbours who had been doing what he could for the invalid, and was a witness of its dying struggles, went home to his wife solemnised by its death and said, "Ah! Mary, Bob Docherty's pig's in eternity noo."

A story akin to these, and, I understand, well attested as genuine, is told of an eminent D.D. in one of the Border counties. He was paying a

round of visits among his parishioners, and on inquiring at one of the houses how they all were, was told they were all quite well except Dauvit, who was so ill that they had scarcely any hope of his recovery; for he was very old, and had been ill for several weeks, and all the remedies they had tried proved of no use. The minister sympathised with the family, and tried to comfort them by saying that as long as there was life there was hope. Before leaving he conducted a short service, and in his prayer Dauvit was duly remembered. The reverend gentleman's annoyance may be imagined when he learnt that his petitions had been offered, not for the aged head of the house, but for a donkey that bore the honoured Scriptural name.

Visitors to Dublin must have observed the exceedingly ragged and disreputable attire of many of the car-drivers. I am indebted to an Irish lady for the following, which furnishes a good specimen of Irish humour. A gentleman wishing a car was offered the service of one, the driver of which was enveloped in a bundle of rags. He refused him, and signalled to another driver respectably dressed, to whom he said that it was a disgrace to Dublin to allow any one so shamefully ragged as the rejected Jarvie to ply for

hire. "Ah, sur," he replied, "you must excuse him, sur; he can't help it."

"Why can't he help it? Why does his wife not mend his clothes for him?"

"Ah, your honour, he has no wife."

"Then why doesn't he get another coat?"

"He can't, sur. I assure you he can't."

"Why can't he?"

"Well, sur, it has been tried once or twice, but it can't be done. He is so very ticklesome that divil a tailor in Dublin daar lay a tape on him."

It is strange but true that the Irishman is the best representative of ludicrous "bulls" and also of dexterous repartees, mental characteristics that have apparently nothing in common, and are even antagonistic. An Irish gentleman told me of an exceedingly happy reply of the well-known and witty Father Healy, who excited the envy and jealousy of his brother priests by his never being found at a loss for an answer. They accordingly prepared a trap for him, from which they thought he could not find escape. At an evening party a lull in the conversation was judiciously chosen, and one of the conspirators called out to Healy, who was at the other end of the table, "By the way, Healy, what is the

difference between the seraphim and the cherubim?" "Oh," replied Healy promptly, "there *was* a difference, but they've made it up."

A similar instance is that of two M.P.'s (whose names I suppress) of opposite political opinions, both sharp-tempered and in the habit of picking holes in each other's coats. They were having a game at billiards, when one of them—a notorious but unsuccessful tuft-hunter—saw the other play a stroke which he did not understand, and bawled out in a rasping tone, "What on earth made you play that stroke?" "I played it," replied the other viciously, "to get what you have all your life tried for in vain. I played it for position."

In the autumn of 1884 I visited Canada as a member of the British Association.

A number of tours were arranged for by the Canadians as necessary emollient alteratives to scientific and philosophical discussion. Many who were neither philosophers nor scientists, and among these myself, took advantage of these excursions. One of the most extensive was a run from Montreal to the Rockies, and back by Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington, and New York. There was considerable excitement in connection with the ensuing Presidential election, about which and previous contests many stories

were told. I venture to reproduce one which I thought worthy of being remembered. The famous orator Webster on the occasion of his candidature addressing a huge concourse in the open air, had some of his majestic periods spoiled by an enemy from Buffalo, who, amid the admiring silence of the rest of the audience, kept shouting "Louder! louder!" Of this Webster took no notice till he came to his peroration, which was somewhat like this:—

"And now, my countrymen, as I draw to a close this speech to which with your wonted indulgence you have so kindly listened, I find myself oppressed with thoughts too big for words. Somehow the breathless attention of this vast assemblage, realising as it does the fateful occasion on which we have met, causes another scene to rise before me—a greater concourse before which we shall stand face to face to answer as I have answered to you for my actions in the past. As I think of that final scene in the catastrophe of the world, when the volumes of history shall be for ever closed, and the recording angel shall have laid down his pen, I am filled with awe. But I can imagine that in that tremendous moment, when all creation shall bow down in silence before its God, and when the mighty

archangel shall stand with one foot on the earth and the other on the ocean, and shout in a voice of thunder, that shall echo from pole to pole, that time shall be no longer,—even in that sublime, that awful moment, there will be some darned skunk from Buffalo shouting out 'Louder! louder!!'"

It is told of Sir John Macdonald, Premier of Canada, that when on one occasion in Montreal he presided over a large meeting of Scotsmen resident in Canada, the majority of the audience, Lowland and Highland alike, appeared arrayed in the kilt in recognition of the Celtic origin of their chairman. Sir John observing this remarked with characteristic humour that at all other meetings with his fellow-countrymen people were in the habit of taking off their hats to him, but he saw that to-night they had taken off—— The rest of the sentence was drowned in roars of laughter.

On my journey to the Rocky Mountains I heard from a fellow-traveller whom I did not know a marvellous, and what I thought an incredible, account of the expedition with which fire-engines could be got ready for action in American and Canadian towns. A short stay was made at Winnipeg, where fire-brigade drill

was practised twice every day in order to keep horses and men thoroughly up to the mark in a town built almost entirely of wood. The late Rev. Mr Brooke Lambert, rector of Greenwich, and I resolved to see for ourselves how far the account was correct, and went to the fire-station, watches in hand. It may seem incredible, but it is strictly true, that between the time when the signal of the supposed fire was given and the readiness of the fire-engine to rush out for its extinction exactly seven seconds passed. A short explanation may make this credible. The electric signal intimating the fire opens at the same instant the stable doors, which are just beside the engine. The horses are trained to rush out and of themselves take their places one on each side of the pole; the driver jumps on to the box; others run some to the front of the pole, some to each side; the driver on the box pulls a string, the harness suspended above drops on to the backs of the horses, one click of a spring fixes it in position, one or two other clicks complete the fastenings of the traces, reins, and head-stalls, and all is finished. I forget how many men were employed, but there was a man at every point where he was required. It must be borne in mind that the work of each was approxi-

mately *simultaneous*. The fire being merely imaginary, the horses are at once unharnessed and return to the stable. The only awkwardness connected with such perfect drill is said to be, that as this is gone through twice every day, the horses are so accustomed to return to their stable after the drill, that when the fire is a real one they sometimes refuse to leave the station.

I went to see the principal school in Winnipeg, but I could not do so in school hours. Its plan and equipment seemed in no respect behind those of good schools in Scotland.

Fire-drill is regularly practised in school. I had not an opportunity of seeing it in operation, but an inspector of schools informed me that a school of 400 pupils can be emptied in three-quarters of a minute. The drill is very accurate. Every door and block of benches are put in charge of selected pupils, whose duties are so specific and intelligible that crowding is practically impossible and the means of rapid exit fully available.

The temptation to lay under contribution my notes and recollections of other incidents in American and Continental tours is great, but considerations of space forbid me to yield to it.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

INTERCOURSE WITH THE DEPARTMENT PLEASANT — MY CONNECTION WITH IT SLACKENED, NOT BROKEN — RELATIONS WITH MANAGERS AND TEACHERS.

In view of the enormous amount of correspondence which passes daily between a large body of inspectors and the Department, in much of which there are abundant possibilities of error and oversight, it is, so far as I know, extremely seldom that the correspondence is marred by anything irritating or unpleasant. Accuracy is of course imperative, but any departure from it is pointed out for correction with genuine unfailing courtesy. I know of only two noteworthy cases, and they are now many years old, in which there was a savour of smart but not ill-natured *persiflage*. In the first case the examiner in London indulged in needless sarcasm, and as usually happens when one is tempted to use that untrustworthy weapon, the recoil of which, like that of a boomerang, is dangerous, he came

off second best. Long before the separation of the Scottish from the English Department, and when the number of pupil-teachers was comparatively small, their examination papers were sent up to London along with the school report. My colleague, Mr David Middleton, had on one occasion, from hurry or oversight, marked as correct an exercise in arithmetic in which there was a slight error. This was observed by an examiner in the Education Office, and presented an opportunity of gently "sitting upon" an inspector too tempting to be foregone. He accordingly worked out the sum in blue pencil on the margin of the exercise, and, doubtless in the hope of receiving a repentant explanation and apology, sent the paper with his correction to Mr Middleton with the cutting query, "Mr Middleton, do you still approve?" Taking advantage of the curt question which admitted of a simple categorical reply, and feeling that he could afford to be found chargeable with a slight mistake without losing his character as an efficient officer, he replied, "Certainly not.—D.M." His friends insinuated that he utilised his initials, which readily lend themselves to the form D—Mn. As to the accuracy of the insinuation I have no opinion.

Another colleague, who had hired a carriage for his visit to a school, had a diary of his weekly duties and expenses returned to him, the Treasury official whose duty it is to check all such expenditure, and whose inquiries are sometimes unnecessary and vexatious, suggesting the question, "Mr X, was the railway not available for this journey? The distance as the crow flies is about eight miles."

"No," replied Mr X, "for (1) I am not a crow, and (2) there is a navigable river between the railway station and the school, and though I can swim my assistant can't."

It is only fair to say that the Treasury officials and not "My Lords" are responsible for irritating questions of this kind, which are sometimes accompanied by expressions of regret by the Education Department that they have no choice but to forward to the persons concerned all questions or objections proceeding from the Treasury. When I retired from the service I did so with a comfortable feeling of having been treated with a fairness which was not only considerate but kindly; that the Department and I had contrived to spend nearer forty than thirty years in the furtherance of a common object, in the mutual interchange of good offices and

friendly counsels, in connection with which nothing remains but pleasing memories.

When my service after an extension of a year and a half beyond the statutory limits came to an end, I received from Lord Balfour and Sir Henry Craik a most hearty and gratifying recognition of what I had attempted to do in the discharge of duty, accompanied by a request that, though no longer officially connected with them, I should look with a kindly eye on their doings, and communicate with them on any points which I might think worthy of being discussed. To this request I have several times gladly, and I hope profitably, responded.

It is a pleasure to feel that the tie connecting me with the Education Department is, from my being asked to take part in the examination of secondary schools, only slackened, not broken.

While I can refer thus heartily to my relations with the heads of the Department, I can speak in similar terms of my colleagues in the inspectorate, with whom my intercourse has been all that could be desired. In all the districts in which I have been placed I have been closely associated almost throughout with men who not only knew their work and did it, but between whom and

myself there was generally the most friendly and satisfactory understanding. With school boards and other managers I have been equally fortunate. I do not say that there were not, at wide intervals, cases in which there was an intelligible divergence of opinion on minor points, but I have a distinct impression that, as a rule, every suggestion I made was fairly considered, and either adopted or declined for reasons which were thought on the whole satisfactory.

With regard to teachers my attitude has never been one of suspicion and distrust. I dealt with them as fellow-workers with me in a common cause, for the successful promotion of which sympathetic co-operation was essential. I have tried to be fair to them and also to the Department whose servant I was, and while better pleased to praise than to blame I have praised without favour, and when necessary, though with regret, found fault without fear. I have endeavoured to stimulate intelligence, give direction to honest effort, and recognise with kindly encouragement good work of very different types wherever found and by whatever methods produced, holding, as I do, that excellence is not the result of any one uniform and stereotyped method. I am painfully conscious that I have

fallen considerably short of my ideal, but my faults (and which of us has none?) have been lightly assessed and generously pardoned. The recollection of my intercourse with the men and women among whom my official life has been spent is a very pleasant one. I think of them as a most valuable class of public servants, year by year taking a higher level in culture and social position, and doing eminently useful work with praiseworthy fidelity and success, many of them for emoluments below their merits. I am always glad to recognise and be recognised everywhere by teachers with whom I have come into contact. The great kindness which I have experienced at their hands in Aberdeen, Glasgow, and Edinburgh leaves no doubt in my mind as to the sincerity of their response to this friendly feeling.

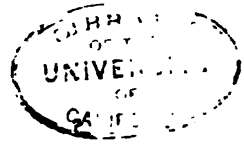
I have always had and still have excellent health, and, I should think, an almost unique record in one respect, that on the score of health I never had occasion to ask leave of absence during my long service. My life has been on the whole a very busy one, and not very favourable to continuous literary effort; but I have been able from time to time to snatch a few hours from official work and utilise them in

dealing with topics, educational and other, in which I was interested.

A retrospect of the past forty years fills me not unreasonably with a very large measure of content. While it represents a good deal of hard work it also recalls the memory of many congenial friendships, and of much enjoyment which has left no after-taste of bitterness. It is accompanied by a consciousness of having been engaged in important work, of having tried with more or less success to do it, and of having retired from it physically and mentally sound, before the capacity of enjoyment was exhausted. The result of it all is that, were it possible to put back the hands of the clock, I should cheerfully go through it again.

I do not forget that some one has said that a great (meaning *large*) book is a great evil. It falls to the lot of few to be the author of a *great* book. My ambition takes no such lofty flight. It would have been easy to make this one larger, but it is probably large enough for all the really useful matter it contains. I have put down, as they occurred to me, such a selection of my experiences — some perhaps useful, others amusing — as might be fairly readable. If I have succeeded in this, and

especially if I have said anything that may be useful to teachers or to the younger members of the inspectorate, I shall not regret the employment I have made of my leisure. And now for the present I lay down my pen.



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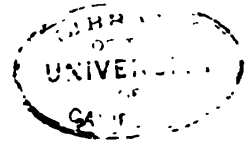

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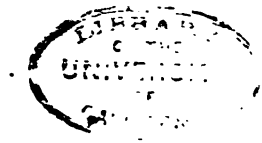

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